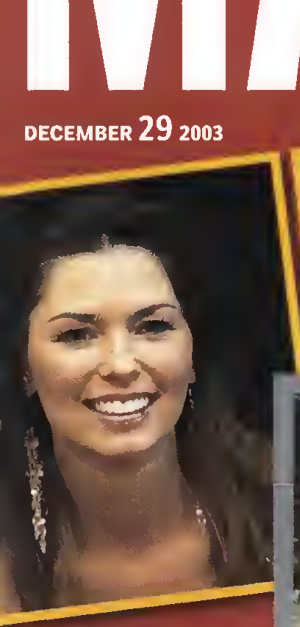
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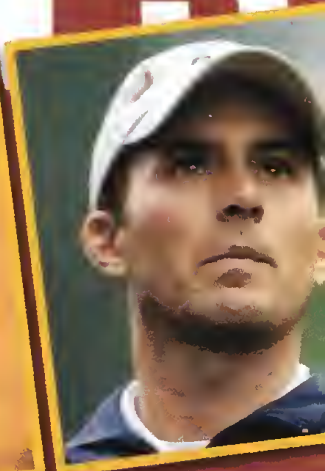
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'You come into this with very strong convictions and a context: this is how I see the world,' says the new PM

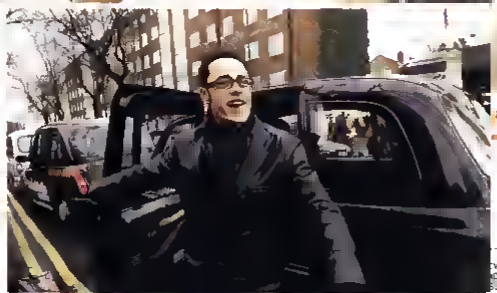
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MACLEAN'S

CANADA'S WEEKLY NEWSMAGAZINE

Cover Story

CANADIAN OF THE YEAR

Stephen Lewis has been a politician and a diplomat. Now he is spearheading the fight against the ravages of HIV/AIDS in Africa. *Maclean's* salutes him.

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TYER, FRANK GUNN/CP. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER J. MORRIS, PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S, CHRIS O'MEARA/AP. OTOGRAPH BY LOUISE GUBB (INSET). CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S. PHOTOGRAPH BY DEBORAH SAMUEL. JO. HOUYE/AP. PHOTOGRAPH BY RANDY QUAN. PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S



A WORLD OF DIFFERENCES

At year's end, the people and events that defined Canada transcended our borders

THE FIRST TIME I met Stephen Lewis, he was living a far more comfortable life than the one he chooses these days. In the 1980s, as Canada's ambassador to the United Nations, Lewis worked at UN headquarters in New York, tirelessly promoting Canadian foreign policy—and speaking eloquently on Africa, a lifelong passion. The hours were long and the pressure intense, but living conditions for a diplomat based in Manhattan were appropriately comfortable. Today, a year past the usual retirement age, the 66-year-old Lewis has moved to more direct—and emotionally devastating—involvement in one of Africa's biggest sorrows. As the UN's special envoy to that continent for HIV/AIDS, he travels there from his Toronto home at least once a month, and has extensive ground-level knowledge of the effects of a disease that could, by some estimates, kill up to 200 million people by mid-century.

That estimate is a worst-case scenario: saving more lives depends on people like Lewis and their success in, as Jonathon Gatehouse writes in our cover package, "making indifferent governments and their seemingly uncaring citizens pay attention to a tragedy they have ignored for two decades." Lewis's successes on behalf of that cause led us to name him as our first-ever *Maclean's* Canadian of the Year (page 20). Still, in a year that featured dramatic triumphs and tragedies at home and abroad, he was by no means a unanimous pick, based on our criteria: the Canadian who made the most outstanding contribution to his or her field. Other nominees included a historian, athletes, a firefighter and performers: one of our readers' top choices in our on-line poll was Shania Twain, who showed this year that she hasn't forgotten her roots in the wake of international success.

One name not on that list is perhaps the most talked-about Canadian this year: Paul Martin. That's because, in less than a month as Prime Minister, he hasn't had much chance to affect the lives of Canadians outside the Liberal party. But as our question-and-answer session with him shows (page 58), that should change soon, because his ambitious agenda has an equally ambitious timeline.

One tricky issue for Martin to confront—as our annual poll makes clear (page 28)—is how to reconcile the desire of Canadian business leaders for warmer, closer ties with the United States, with the distinct lack of enthusiasm that many other Canadians have for that goal. 2004 is an election year in the U.S.—and, almost certainly, here. Against that backdrop, Martin will be trying to smooth relations with George W. Bush's administration, even as many Canadians link their unhappiness to Bush's policies.

> **"Lewis moved to direct and emotionally devastating involvement in one of Africa's biggest sorrows"**

What links those topics is the increasing importance of looking beyond our borders. Whether you like the U.S. or not, no one can ignore its importance. And we're coming to understand—through good things like more global trade and bad things like SARS and AIDS—that events that happen far away can immediately resonate at home. Lewis understands that. So, based on his stated intentions, does Martin. A world that once seemed so big is now, for better and worse, getting smaller. Even as it does so, it reminds us of what privileged turf we occupy in Canada. With that in mind, Happy New Year to all—in and beyond our borders.

Anthony Wilson-Smith

response@macleans.ca to comment on The Editor's Letter

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'The reasons I left Canada ring as true now as they did in 1978. The lack of compensation both financially and emotionally will drive out physicians.' —Dr. T. J. Murphy, Houston

Bilateral divide

I am continually amazed by the Canadian preoccupation with all things American, as demonstrated by *Maclean's* on an almost weekly basis ("Blame America," Politics, Dec. 8). It surely has to be one of the great love-hate international relationships in history, but it is largely one-sided. Perhaps Canada should stop trying to seek a national identity by simply blaming America for everything. Having met and worked with hundreds of Americans, I can tell you that most are kind, generous and generally optimistic in outlook, even as they defend freedom by sacrificing their sons and daughters on the field of battle. Canada can remain on its elitist high horse—its relevance in the international community is waning.

Gary Compton, Wesley Chapel, Fla.



Even Americans are tiring of U.S. politics

As a Canadian in the United States, I am happy to see that among always apologetic Canadians, at least *Maclean's* recognizes that Canada is not always at fault. Even Americans are getting sick and tired of Washington politics these days. According to the American news media, everyone is wrong but President George W. Bush and the United States. Might does *not* make right. It never has and it never will. Where are the statesmen who will stand for the moral right rather than the current economic situation or the next election?

Betty Walling, Orem, Utah

Lacking Canadian experience

It heartens me that at least one Canadian journalist—Mary Janigan—is attempting to change the situation for new Canadians seeking jobs ("A glimmer of hope," Upfront, Dec. 15). I chose this country and love it with all my heart, but from my own experience, things have *not* changed appreciably in the past 40 years. It is heartbreaking to hear of professionals, and also of those who are less qualified but competent to hold decent white-collar positions, being turned down time and time again because they "lack Canadian experience." I learned long ago that all too often that phrase is merely a euphemism for "coloured," or "immigrant," or "foreigner." It is shameful that in this country too many new Canadians are reduced to driving cabs and delivering pizzas, it is all too often, after years of heartbreaking struggle and living below the poverty level, that one may at last get a half decent job. I know that I am not the only immigrant who was close to a nervous breakdown during my job searches when I came to Canada in 1964 because of this discrimination. But I am still proud to be Canadian precisely because of people like Mary Janigan—Canadians who do have a social conscience.

Luan Pinto, Ottawa

'Tis the season | The holidays are a reminder to be thinking of others

Anthony Wilson-Smith's Dec. 15 "Editor's Letter" praising the volunteer and charitable sectors struck a chord with readers. For one, Gordon Cann of Sidney, B.C., wrote that Wilson-Smith's 'challenge to think about which end of a charity operation you'd rather be on should be pasted on billboards across the country.'

Contemplating Conrad

With his formidable intellect and his gifts of articulation, both verbal and literary, Conrad Black had the potential to become a truly great man in the mould of his historical heroes ("Just like a robber baron," Peter C. Newman, Dec. 15). The tragedy is that if he is remembered at all, it may well be as a pathetic creature who squandered much of this potential, condemned forever to have an asterisk accompany his name. As so many of us learned as children in Sunday school, it all comes down to choices.

Donald Ostergard, Drumheller, Alta.

I have always enjoyed reading Peter C. Newman and probably always will. But about Conrad Black, never again! My blood pressure will not be able to take it.

Art De Lorenzi, Port Charlotte, Fla.

Economic Darwinism

I generally appreciate the opinions and prognostications of Donald Coxe on economic matters, but I have rising doubts about his order of priorities. In "The play's the thing" (Column, Dec. 8), he appears to be arguing that society must be ordered to the optimum benefit of corporate competitiveness as opposed to optimizing human welfare. But there is more to life than money, the economic system is a tool for the benefit of humanity, not the other way around. Maybe it's not the European social safety net that Coxe criticizes that's a mess; maybe it's a system that dispassionately uses and/or discards people in a relentless pursuit for profit that's all messed up.

Geoff Krause, Brentwood Bay, B.C.

Israeli defence

It is rather disconcerting to read Patrick Page's anti-Israeli comments in his letter "Israel and the UN" (The Mail, Dec. 15). Israel is not perfect, but the goal of the Palestinian suicide bomber is to maximize civilian casualties. Yes, Palestinian civilians have died in Israeli operations, but not by design and certainly not as part of a well-orchestrated plan as has been the case on the part of the Palestinians. Page refers to "massacres" committed by Israelis and cites Jenin as an example, which it was not. The Israeli operation in Jenin and the handling of it by the media (especially in Europe) are an exquisite example of why there is little reason to hope for peace in the Middle East. The Israeli operation in Jenin was

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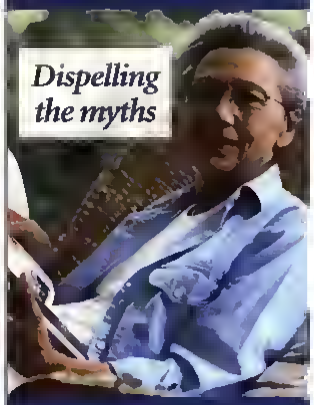


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How can citizens judge doctors' salaries without comparing to other professions, like nurses?

designed to eliminate terrorists and their infrastructure. The initial media reports based on eyewitness (meaning Palestinian) accounts were that there was an Israeli massacre, with tens of thousands of civilian casualties and hidden mass graves. It wasn't until the UN investigated the situation that it discovered there were approximately 50 Palestinian casualties, most of whom were armed combatants. Hence, no massacre.

Robert Kurtz, Toronto

Letter writer Patrick Page says that Israel should be grouped in President George W. Bush's "axis of evil" because of its nuclear stockpile. When Bush named Iran a member of the axis of evil, he meant that if Iran had a nuclear weapon, it wouldn't hesitate to bomb any civilized democracy. Just because Pakistan, India, France, Germany and other countries have a nuclear arsenal, doesn't mean that they are evil. Has Israel used its nuclear weapons? They are only present for self defence. Page also stated that Israel refuses refugees their right of return. Before the war of 1948, hundreds of thousands of Arabs left Palestine with the intention of coming back after Israel was crushed by Arab forces. When Israel won the war, it is true it did not let back in those "refugees" who left willingly, but it didn't kick out a single Arab.

Nechemya Dukesz, Thornhill, Ont.

> "What kind of society produces pedophiles that prey on the impoverished young in foreign lands?

What ails health care

You report that almost all doctors would be happier with higher fees for service ("The doctor is in pain," Cover, Dec. 8), and that they would probably all be completely happy with more money and less work. I suspect that most working Canadian readers' initial reaction was, "Well, wouldn't we all!" How can citizens judge the fairness of medical workers' remuneration without being able to make valid comparisons? How about a yearly report on professional compensation including doctors, nurses, athletes, administrators, CEOs, plumbers, teachers, dentists, lawyers, carpenters, etc. This might be at least as useful as your annual university survey. On a last note, let's promote a health-care council that will publicize, educate and recommend policies on all aspects of the medical care business, especially fixing the absurd situation that combines a shortage of medical practitioners with a refusal to recognize foreign professional qualifications.

Keith F. J. Booth, 108 Mile Ranch, B.C.

There is no doubt of doctors' highly valuable place in our society. They should be rewarded accordingly, and I think they generally are. You state that the average general practitioner working 52 hours a week plus 17 hours on call had an average *net* income of $110,997. I am and have been a general practice lawyer for nearly 20 years. I do not begrudge any doctor his or her pay, but I can tell you that most general practice lawyers do not net $110,000 per year, even if they work similar hours. Also, the health-care system always pays, pays in a fairly short time and the cheques don't bounce.

Gregory Côté, Irvine, Alta.

Houses all in a row

"Innovation" means something newly introduced. There is no way that narrow-fronted urban row housing can be described as innovative ("Smaller and smarter," Dec. 1), as it has direct precedents going back, at least, to 18th-century housing in London and elsewhere. Avi Friedman, the McGill University architect, is certainly to be commended for encouraging the building of such housing, but even when I was studying architecture at McGill in the 1940s we had projects to design modern versions of these Georgian originals. Far from being innovative, Mr. Friedman's housing is no more than a mock-Georgian pastiche of a housing type that has been built more or less continually for nearly 300 years.

Lionel Loshak, Kingston, Ont.

Fore and foul

I read Jennifer Cole's ("Playing with a Handicap," Over to You, Dec. 1) with a great deal of shame. How dare we apply pressure to close the golf course at the Ferndale minimum security institution near Mission, B.C.? First, we have the audacity to incarcerate these people, then we deny them a chance to take part in what Cole calls "a restorative justice program . . . that enables them to give back to the community." Ms. Cole hopes, as do I, that people can change. My hope is also that prison changes—from pleasurable to punitive. Let inmates earn the right to enjoy golf and conversation, coffee and burgers afterwards, when they are again responsible enough to be part of society, not while they are removed from it for failing to be so.

David Livicker, Atikokan, Ont.

Sexual imperialism

I had to force myself to keep reading "Sad little girls" (Investigation, Nov. 24). It's inconceivable to me how any human being could be callous enough to sell a child, send her out to do tricks or lure her for sexual purposes. Thank God I obviously don't know enough about starvation, demoralization, greed or lust. I kept looking for suggestions as to what Canadians could do to ameliorate the situation.

Sandy Easterbrook, Saskatoon

What kind of society produces pedophiles that prey on the impoverished young in foreign lands? Thank God I obviously don't know enough about starvation, demoralization, greed or lust. I kept looking for suggestions as to what Canadians could do to ameliorate the situation.

Angela Sheng, Cantley, Que., **and Nancy Doubleday,** Ottawa

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IN DEFERENCE TO YEAR END REVELATIONS

At last! Maclean's first ever *Canadian of the Year* edition introducing the one Canadian who had the greatest impact on our lives in 2003. Subject to argument of course. And combined with that the 20th Annual Year-End Poll that probes the year's most memorable moments for insights into the nation's hopes and aspirations for the years ahead.

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MACLEAN'S BEHIND THE SCENES



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/PAINTING BY CHARLES PACHTER/CANADIAN FLAG 1965

CANADIAN VALUES, EH?

As 2003 gives way to 2004, Canadians are feeling proud about their differences from the United States, and our approval of the policies that have driven wedges between us and the Americans—the war in Iraq, marijuana possession and same sex marriage—proves it. That's the principal finding of *Maclean's* 20th annual year-end poll.

"But the pride runs deeper than mere knee-jerk anti-Americanism," says national affairs correspondent Charlie Gillis (above). "It's manifesting itself as a belief in our mission as a country to promote personal liberty, peace and good government. I think most Canadians recognize that Americans share those ideals, yet are pleased that Canada is following its own path to reach them."

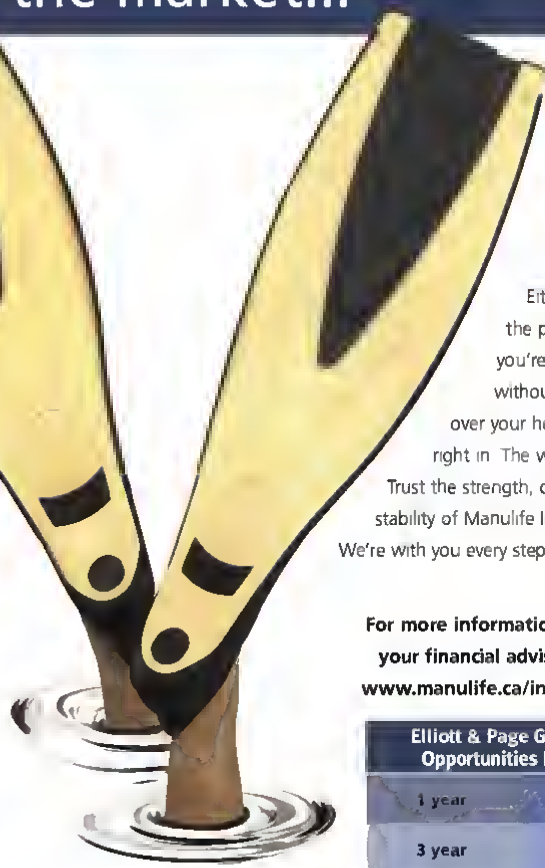
Over the two decades that *Maclean's* has conducted the year-end poll, the magazine has asked many of the same questions. That's resulted in the creation of a rare and valuable tool for monitoring Canadian trend lines. "We're in a unique position to give our readers a clear sense of the national mood," says Gillis, who joined the *Maclean's* editorial team in August.

Having arrived at the magazine 10 years into his reporting career, Gillis, 34, has previously worked out of Fredericton, Toronto, Edmonton and Vancouver. In this issue, he writes about the pulse of our nation as the year draws to a close. He's also seen much of that nation. "At some time or another, I've filed from every single province plus two territories—which I figure makes me about the luckiest reporter in Canada."

He was also part of a group of senior writers and editors involved in the final process of parsing the list of names and nominees for *Maclean's* first Canadian of the Year: Stephen Lewis (this issue's cover subject). "Lewis exemplifies the values of compassion and social awareness that extend past our borders."

See complete results of the year-end poll on-line at *www.macleans.ca/webspecials*.
For further information about this article, contact: behindthescenes@macleans.ca.

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Iraq | Post-capture convulsions in an unsettled country

If anyone thought the capture of Saddam Hussein—plucked like a rat from his subterranean hidey-hole—would turn the big page in Iraq, perhaps it's time to revisit that thought. Bomb and machine-gun attacks on American soldiers, local politicians and Shia clergy continued apace, like the one pictured above: a daring grenade attack on a supply train near Fallujah in which teenage Iraqis liberated cartons of Pepsi and other goods bound for a U.S. military base with the glee of conquering heroes.

Worse, perhaps, than the spasm of mostly small-arms violence that claimed dozens of lives, were the tribal and religious divisions the tyrant's capture unleashed. In predominantly Shia areas, which had reeled under Saddam's repressive hand, celebrations went on for days. But in the so-called Sunni triangle there was widespread anger and the kind of settling of scores that can reverberate for generations. Those divisions played themselves out, too, in Iraq's Governing Council, with deputies accusing each other of sabotaging the push for independence.



Jubilant looters after an attack on a U.S. supply train; an equally contented George W. Bush

World capitals rejoiced at Saddam's humiliation. Still, France and Germany would not move beyond previously stated intentions to alleviate Iraq's burdensome debt. No one volunteered additional troops to help with security; and George W. Bush's musing that Saddam should get the death penalty did not resonate well in much of the world.

With Saddam in custody, Republican Washington could barely keep the grin off its face. But this is where the politics of Iraq get interesting: any trial will likely play out in the midst of this year's presidential election. Bush can argue he has rid the world of a nasty despot, but his opponents will ask where are the weapons of mass destruction whose existence was used to justify war, and where is the exit strategy for American troops mired in Iraq's decades-long angst. Humiliated, certainly, Saddam still possesses that unique talent for international mischief.

Quote of the week | **'My name is Saddam Hussein. I am president of Iraq and I want to negotiate.'** Iraq's fallen leader, in English to a U.S. soldier, as he emerged from his underground hiding hole

FaceTime



Conspiracy
Gaza-born Canadian Jamal Akkal, 23, was formally charged in an Israeli military court with being a Hamas assassin, being trained to attack Jewish targets in North America. Akkal denied the allegation and said his confession was tricked out of him after 20 days of non-stop interrogation.



Angel of death
Charles Cullen, a 43-year-old nurse charged with murdering an ailing priest, said he has killed as many as 40 critically ill people over 16 years at nine hospitals and a nursing home in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, mostly by drug overdoses to ease their suffering.



Another battle
His voice cracking, Nova Scotia Liberal leader Danny Graham, 41, quit the political battlefield to spend more time with his wife, Sheelagh Nolan, whose thyroid cancer has worsened.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: KHALID MOHAMMED/CP; ARIEL SCHALIT/CP; KATHY JOHNSON/THE COURIER NEWS/AP; ANDREW VAUGHAN/CP; LARRY DOWNING/REUTERS

Mary Janigan | ON THE ISSUES



THE TAXPAYER WILL PAY

New election financing reforms shift most of the burden to individual Canadians

IN HIS DELIGHTFULLY savvy memoir *Leo A Life*, retiring senator Leo Kolber devotes a chapter to his tribulations as a Liberal bagman. It is a doleful, occasionally comical tale of the suspicion and scrutiny that he dealt with for more than two decades as he scrounged desperately needed funds for the federal party. At one dinner at his home in mid-2002, at $10,000 a couple, TV cameras jostled to film the entrants. "The bagman gets sneered at," he told *Maclean's* this month. "The public perceives that somehow the people who give important money get important favours. But the biggest givers are the banks—and you know what happened to their mergers."

Money may be the root of all politics. But as new fundraising legislation takes effect on Jan. 1, it has also become a major source of behind-the-scenes stress for the governing party. Under the former law, there was no limit on the amount that any individual or entity could *give*. (There were, and still are, limits on how much parties and candidates can *spend* in an election.) And the names of donors to leadership candidates, riding associations and nomination contestants were not made public. The new law, which Jean Chrétien pushed through last June, demands full disclosure and limits individual contributions to $5,000 per year per party. Unions and firms may give only $1,000 per party to candidates and riding associations.

> "The law means more money for the political parties: the separatist Bloc Québécois could receive an extra $10 million"

With help from Martin's leftover leadership war chest and last-minute fundraisers, the party has just managed to pay off its debt of more than $3 million. But some provincial wings are in the red. Quebec is estimated to be $3 million in the hole. Insiders also fear the new law is going to leave them scrambling to raise at least $5 million from individual donors (that would have come from business) for the coming election. It is such a dicey legacy for Paul Martin that he asked a member of his inner circle, consultant Jamie Deacey, to deal with the mess.

Worse, when voters do understand the law, they may be very upset—because taxpayers will be making up much of the shortfall. Elections Canada figures Ottawa would have refunded $21.9 million in election expenses in the 2000 election, instead of $7.7 million, if the new law had been in place. It also introduces regular payments to parties based on their votes in the last election. In total, parties could get an extra $41 million over the next four years, including $10 million for the separatist Bloc Québécois. Even partisans object. "Political parties should live by their donors," says former party president Stephen LeDrew.

In the short term, insiders say, the Liberals will likely raise membership fees for their exclusive Laurier Club for large donors from the current $1,000. (Members are invited to parties with the PM and ministers.) Party fundraisers are also struggling to find influential members with lots of friends. "In the past, I got $50,000 from one company with one call," says an insider. "Now, it will take 10 calls to 10 people."

Is this an improvement? Sadly, I think not. MPs will be spending more time wooing wealthy donors. And the perception of privileged access will simply shift from companies to bagmen with rich pals. Kolber says I am wrong: taxpayers *should* contribute more to the political process. I agree with limits on donations, but they should be higher. Firms and unions should be allowed to give. And publish everyone's name. But, against all odds, I hope Kolber is right. M

Mary Janigan is a political and policy writer. mary.janigan@macleans.rogers.com



InBrief

Free at last

Keiko, the celebrity orca who won hearts as the star of the *Free Willy* movies and then broke them again when he refused to return to the wild, died suddenly of pneumonia in a Norwegian fjord. He was 27 and had spent most of his life in captivity. A foundation attempted to return him to his native waters off Iceland five years ago, but he had become too dependent on handlers, who fed him. They buried him secretly rather than have a spectacle made of his death.

Hockey tragedy

The irony couldn't have been more cruel. Just as rising NHL star Dany Heatley was getting ready to step back on the ice—after the high speed car crash in September that took the life of teammate Dan Snyder—another senseless tragedy: former Chicago Blackhawk defenceman Keith Magnuson, 56, was killed in a crash just north of Toronto in a car driven by friend Rob Ramage, 44, a former Toronto Maple Leaf captain. The two were returning from a funeral when their rented car veered into the oncoming lane, clipped one car and smashed almost head on into an SUV. Hockey's alumni mourned the likeable Magnuson, a career tough guy, and were shocked when York Regional Police charged Ramage with impaired and dangerous driving, the initial charge based on the officers' impressions from the scene and not a blood test. Ramage was widely regarded as a thoughtful guy who was helping others adjust to life after hockey.



Magnuson

A too-big sky

One hundred years after Orville and Wilbur Wright's historic first flight, a replica craft clattered down a wooden runway in North Carolina and ... ground to a rude halt in a big mud puddle.

Looking heavenward, the omens weren't much better. NASA scientists were worried a huge dust storm that was building on the red planet might impede the arrivals of three Mars-bound probes, one European and two from the U.S., which are set to land on Dec. 25, Jan. 3 and Jan. 24 respectively.



JOHN MCCONNICO CP/AP (TOP); JOHN DZIEKAN/CHICAGO TRIBUNE/CP; BOB JORDAN/AP

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ROGERS

ScoreCard | Looking back on a year of ups and downs

JANUARY

▼ **Toronto voters:** Ex-Liberal "Rat Packer" John Nunziata announces bid for mayor's chair, just as voters dared to hope that retiring Mel Lastman was irreplaceable.

▼ **Raelians:** Fringe Parti démocrate du Québec folds to thwart takeover by Raelian church. Raelians issue denial: "sure, we're a human-cloning, sex-obsessed, space-travelling cult, but entering Quebec politics? That's nuts."

FEBRUARY

▲ **Cricket Canada:** Canadian team snags first-ever win in cricket World Cup, over Bangladesh. Joyous Canadians rise as one to shout "We have a cricket team?"

MARCH

▲ **Senate:** Proposal to honour dozen members of Upper Chamber with stamps, rare good news for group that's taken a licking. Who better to affix to snail mail? But did Canada Post misinterpret calls to stamp out the Senate?

▲ **Don Cherry, Ron MacLean:** *Hockey Night* duo broaden scope of *Coach's Corner* with learned analysis of Iraqi war. CBC suits later say not "appropriate" for two to debate Canada's non-role in combat. Wouldn't want to mix violence with hockey.

APRIL

▲ **Jean Chrétien:** Marks four decades since election as MP by explaining Canada's "principled" stand on U.S.-led war coalition didn't back it but hoped for victory, doesn't support regime change but glad Saddam's gone. Clarity if necessary, but after 40 years, why start now?

▲ **Mike Weir:** First Canuck and first left-hander to win Masters golf tourney. Overcoming this double taboo ends excuse for mediocrity of thousands of alternatively swinging northern duffers. Also confirms American fears about those lefty Canadians.

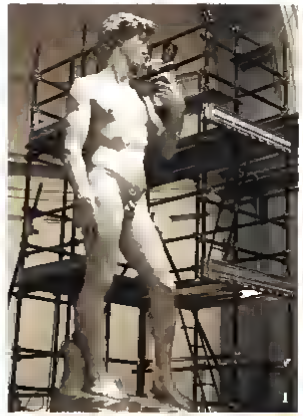
▲ **David.** Michelangelo's marble hunk inspires battle between two Italian women experts in art restoration. One favours scrubbing him with water, the other a slow rub with badger-hair brushes. Not bad choices for a 500-year old guy who had his last wash in 1873.

MAY

▲ **German ants:** Tread lightly, Deutschland. Country appoints 85 protection officers to enforce new law making it illegal to kill ants. Workaholic bugs valued as killers of other garden pests. Law sets benchmark for sensitivity, but may spell death of German picnic.

▼ **China shops:** Proverbial runaway bull enters china-filled antique shop in Lancaster, England. Result is predictable, though misses motherlode of Wedgwood at back of store. Misadventure ends with a bullet, but strikes a blow for all mad cows, and cliché lovers.

▼ **Elocution:** Retirement-minded Jean Chrétien muses about new career as newspaper columnist, adding media doesn't credit his achievements. "We Canadians have an inferiority complex and I am part of it." Sad, but true.











1. David's bath; 2. Conrad meets the press; 3. Heatley at Dan Snyder's funeral; 4. Midge; 5. an embarrassed mayor

JUNE

▼ **God:** Parishioners in Danish village demand reinstatement of their pastor—who was suspended after admitting he's an atheist. Kinda gives you faith in, er, something or other.

JULY

▼ **White Rock, B.C.:** City council considers hiring mediator after closed-door meeting ends in dust-up. One councillor sustains minor injuries after female colleague allegedly stabs him with a pen. Old adage fortunately proves false: they're not mightier than a sword.

AUGUST

▲ **The tomato:** Definition of Canadian climate: 11 months of so-so salad and one month of killer tomatoes. The time is now, folks. Revel in their texture, savour the flavour, ponder the big question: a fruit masquerading as a vegetable, what's that about?

▼ **Conrad Black:** Enrages shareholders by spending US$8 million of Hollinger money on historical documents belonging to Franklin D. Roosevelt—subject of Black's new book. Unlikely Truman will be Black's next biography prez's "buck stops here" credo is for losers without a company credit card.

SEPTEMBER

▲ **Marriage:** Alliance motion defining marriage as guy-gal thing narrowly defeated in Commons. Millions awoke Wednesday to discover (a) sun still rose, and (b) spouse still warming other side of bed. Maybe couples don't need Stephen Harper's help after all.

▲ **Same-sex shopping:** Brit study finds shopping a gal-gal thing. Women are recreational browsers, men have "smash-and-grab approach." Fights ensue if mixed shopping lasts beyond 72 minutes. That's 72 minutes per trip, guys...not 72 minutes per lifetime. Sorry.

OCTOBER

▲ **The Snyder family:** Many of hockey's best lessons come from loss, but rarely is the loss as profound as that of the family of Atlanta Thrasher's Dan Snyder, killed in a crashed car driven by superstar teammate Dany Heatley. Rarely in sports is that lesson one of forgiveness...rarer still is it delivered with such grace.

▲ **The Right:** United at last? Quest for electoral success will depend on choice of leader: someone comfortable with right-wing ideology, hungry for power, and eager to bury the Chrétien legacy. Paul Martin, come on down!

▼ **Air Irving:** New Brunswick dynasty lands a doryload of federal ministers in trouble for accepting gifts of free flights or stays at family fishing lodge. Who was fishing for whom? Irvings could settle ethical mess by prying open petty cash, and buying Air Canada.

NOVEMBER

▼ **Kids these days:** University of Guelph researchers quantify the blindingly obvious: children ignore 66 per cent of parental directions. The rest of the time, the little darlings are asleep.

▲ **Midge and baby:** Barbie's preggers plastic pal wins top-10 rating by Canadian Toy Testing Council but is banned in U.S. by easily scandalized Wal-Mart. Unsure why Midge's hubby, Alan (sold separately), is ill-equipped to reveal the secrets of procreation.

DECEMBER

▼ **Sharon Smith:** Houston, B.C., we have a problem. Town mayor posed nude for proud hubby, wearing only chain of office. Well-circulated stolen photo raised some ire, while others unfazed by full disclosure. Voters now have proof positive she's indeed their first female mayor.

▲ **Jacques Duchesneau:** Head of Canadian Air Transport Security Authority warns travellers to leave fruitcakes at home, performing a valuable public service. Cakes could hide a weapon, he warns. Cakes *are* a weapon, say thousands of intended recipients.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: FABRIZIO G GIANNOZZI/AP; SABINA LOUISE

Mansbridge on the Record



PERCEPTION VS. REALITY

In a year of changes, the challenge is to decide which ones make a difference

AS ONE year slides into another, it's fun to measure how much has really changed in the past 12 months—or whether what's happened has just been the *perception* of change.

■ The prime minister has changed—but has the government? Paul Martin's machine wants us to think so, by trying to push the Chrétien years into history's dustbin. A cynic might suggest the new Prime Minister's Office is following a script written months ago, entitled "Announce a change a day." Steps include dumping much of the old cabinet, cancelling some tainted programs, freezing spending on others, ordering new helicopters, making up with friends. Just one thing "don't be *too* cozy" with George W. Bush. But what they can't change is that they're still Liberals. So is all this real change, or just one of perception? Time will tell.

■ A year ago, federal Tories were confidently wooing New Brunswick Premier Bernard Lord to be their leader. After much hemming and hawing, he said No, deciding instead to seek re-election in his province. That was supposed to be easy for Lord, but he came within a whisker of defeat. Then, federal backroom boys and girls began trekking to Fredericton again, trying to get him to consider running this time for the leadership of the newly merged right. Lord thought again, and said No again. As a new year begins, who's being courted again? No change yet, but as Lord must say each night, never say never.

> **"Paul Martin's people are trying to push the Chrétien years into the dustbin. But what they can't change is that they're still Liberals."**

■ Quick, name the last three federal NDP leaders—and now, the current one? For a guy who doesn't have a seat in the House of Commons, Jack Layton is caught on tape in the hallways of Parliament more than any other leader. He's never seen a camera he doesn't like, and is always prepared to spill out his message track to the effect that "Paul Martin is too corporate friendly" in answer to every question. For Layton, it has definitely been a year of change. A year ago few people outside of downtown Toronto had heard of him. Now, they may not know the NDP leader's name, but they probably recognize his face.

■ Internationally, the big story has been Iraq. A year ago, Hans Blix faced heavy pressure to come up with Saddam Hussein's "hidden" weapons of mass destruction. They're still "hidden," so no change there. But finding, after eight months, the bleary-eyed, unshaven Saddam in a tiny underground hole has left some believers of the "there never were any WMD" theory hedging their bets. What if, they wonder, stashes of chemical and biological agents are suddenly found in undisturbed holes in the dirt around Saddam's hometown of Tikrit? The answer is simple: get used to hearing George W. Bush for four more years, and watch those international leaders who questioned Bush's instincts on Iraq genuflect in their attempts to curry favour with him.

Those are interesting examples, but you may still be looking for one clear-cut example of direct, life-affecting change. No problem—although this offering, I know, hardly ranks up with national politics and foreign affairs. Readers will know I've had an oft-repeated rant about Air Canada thus past year: flimsy plastic knives that snap when you cut anything harder than soft butter. No more sturdy new knives, even though they're still plastic, began arriving in the middle of December. That's *real* change. Now if they could just straighten out that pesky ownership issue. M

Peter Mansbridge is Chief Correspondent of CBC Television News and Anchor of *The National*. To comment: letters@macleans.ca

Passages

MOVING ON Former deputy prime minister **John Manley** turned down **Paul Martin**'s offer to be Canada's ambassador to the U.S., saying he wants to stay close to home. The Ottawa MP is expected to move to the corporate sector and accepted his first post-politics job—head of a task force examining troubled Ontario Power Generation.

AWARDED Cross-country skier **Beckie Scott** finally got the gold, nearly two years after placing third at the 2002 Winter Games in Salt Lake City. The 29-year-old from Vermilion, Alta., was awarded the top prize a month after she was handed the silver because the Russians who finished ahead of her, **Olga Danilova** and **Larissa Lazutina**, tested positive for drugs and a Swiss-based court rejected their separate appeals.



DIED **Dora Wasserman**, a grande dame of Montreal theatre and a cultural protector, staged Yiddish plays in displaced persons camps in Europe and founded North America's only resident Yiddish theatre company in Montreal. She died in hospital there at 84.

RUNNING Fourteen years after he quit federal politics, former NDP leader **Ed Broadbent**, 67, will seek a comeback in Ottawa Centre in what should be a high-stakes contest with **Paul Martin** ally and Liberal backroomer **Richard Mahoney**. Broadbent said he was lured back by leader **Jack Layton**.

RECOVERING U.S. Secretary of State **Colin Powell**, 66, underwent successful surgery for prostate cancer. The operation renewed speculation he plans to step down in a year.

CHARGED Former B.C. pig farmer **Robert Pickton**, 54, will face seven more first-degree murder charges, bringing the number of his alleged victims to 22.

ADMITTED The family of **Strom Thurmond**, the late long-serving U.S. senator who was an ardent segregationist, acknowledged a 78-year-old woman's claim that she is his mixed-race daughter from a liaison with a black servant.

ANDRE FORGET/CCA/CP



THE MACLEAN'S READERS' CHOICE

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Over the past month, readers logged on to www.macleans.ca to vote in our first *Readers' Choice* poll for the most significant news events and personalities in the fields of sport, entertainment and health in 2003



THE RESULTS ARE IN

Your choice for top personality of the year in the field of health

❶ **Stephen Lewis, AIDS activist.** This Canadian diplomat and former politician has opened people's eyes to the urgency of the AIDS crisis as UN Special Envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa. His eloquent descriptions of the desperate existence of millions who are dying without care or treatment have captured international attention.

❷ **Roy Romanow** recommended sweeping changes to medicare as head of the Royal Commission on Health Care, and continued to dog Canada's premiers in 2003 to deliver on their promises to create a national health council

❸ **Dr. John Bell**, senior scientist with Cancer Care Ontario, led the research that could change the way we treat cancer, using viruses to target and kill tumour cells

❹ **Dr. James Young** established order during the chaos of the SARS epidemic as Ontario's Public Safety Commissioner coordinated efforts to control the outbreaks, and spoke frankly to the media and public each day

❺ **Dr. Eric Hoskins**, president of War Child Canada, led a humanitarian team into Iraq to assess the health of civilians and delivered supplies to local hospitals

Other choices for top health-care newsmaker included: University of B.C. researcher **Fabio Rossi**, Canada Research chair in regenerative medicine, who's learning to repair damaged muscle tissue using adult stem cells • Lifelong smoker **Barb Tarbox**, who died of lung cancer on May 18 at age 42. She used her last days to urge 50,000 young people across the country not to smoke • **David Suzuki**, scientist and environmentalist, who takes a broad view on how pollution and urban sprawl affect human health

Thanks to all *Maclean's* readers who let their voices be heard!
For more results from the *Maclean's Readers' Choice* poll look through this issue of *Maclean's* or visit www.macleans.ca.

MACLEAN'S



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MACLEAN'S | CANADIAN OF THE YEAR

CRUSADE FOR LIFE

Stephen Lewis spearheads a desperate battle against HIV/AIDS in Africa

THE STAKES are impossibly high, the cost of failure all too easily measured in the sick, the dead, and the children who are left behind. Stephen Lewis has a job no person in their right mind would envy, tasked with making indifferent governments and their seemingly uncaring citizens pay attention to a tragedy they have ignored for two decades. It is a wonder the United Nations' special envoy for HIV/AIDS in Africa does not break under the stress. It is miraculous that against such long odds, he seems to be succeeding.

The 66-year-old politician, diplomat and activist is *Maclean's* inaugural choice for Canadian of the Year because of his vision, perseverance, and above all his passion. Always articulate, he has devoted his energy, optimism and, occasionally, white-hot anger, to prodding the world to action. And after the hopeful developments of 2003—George W. Bush's pledge to spend US$15 billion over five years to fight AIDS, Canada's promise to change patent laws and make drugs available to those suffering overseas, a World Health Organization plan to put three million people into treatment—the battle's tide might finally be turning in his favour. "When people are dying by the thousands every day, unnecessarily, when we've had this horrendous pandemic unfold for two decades while the world stands by and watches—you'll do anything in your power to move the process," says Lewis. "I don't care what it takes. All I know is that every time I go to Africa, I am shaken to my core."

The evidence of Lewis's lifelong love affair with Africa is scattered throughout his Toronto home—photos on end tables, a line of carvings on the mantel, paintings on the walls. When his friend Kofi Annan, the UN secretary general, asked him to take the job—technically a part-time position—in 2001, he didn't hesitate. But Lewis was unprepared for the horrifying on-the-ground reality of a disease that could kill as many as 200 million people by the middle of the century. His voice quavers and his eyes mist when he recalls the already dead and soon-to-die who haunt his days. On the latest trip—Lewis travels to Africa at least once a month—it was a grandmother he met near Johannesburg. She has lost all five of her adult children to AIDS, and now cares for her four grandchildren, all of them infected with HIV. "That's Africa. That's the reality of AIDS," he says.

At the beginning of 2003, frustrated and disheartened by Western nations' willingness to ignore the crisis and commit "mass murder by complacency" while they devoted billions to ousting Saddam Hussein, Lewis agonized over whether he could continue. But he decided to turn his despair and anger to advantage, and push all the harder. "I'm still at the end of my rope because I find myself not handling things well when I travel. I get too distraught, too quickly," says Lewis. "But what is my emotional disarray compared to the hell that is happening? I'm in a great rage now, as I understand how many lives we have lost. But I don't want to leave until I see the breakthrough."



At a clinic in South Africa, Lewis gives a hug to Delicive, 4, an AIDS orphan

In the past few months, he has helped harness the power of celebrity to raise awareness of the cause, meeting with U2's Bono, Bill Clinton and Bill Gates. In December, Lewis brought Oprah Winfrey to Zambia to see some of the growing number of AIDS orphans—11 to 14 million under the age of 15 in sub-Saharan Africa—and witness the devastation first-hand.

At home, he has started the Stephen Lewis Foundation (*www.stephenlewisfoundation.org*), devoted to providing small-scale funding to communities dealing with the ravages of AIDS. In nine months, it has raised close to $900,000, mostly from individual donations. In Namibia, the money will pay for funerals and coffins; in Kenya, for home care for the dying; in Zambia for a prevention program. Lewis says he has been humbled and revitalized by the outpouring of support. "If our governments were one tenth as generous as average Canadians, the problem would be solved," he says. "Truthfully, when I see what we can accomplish with money on the ground, it's the only time in my life I have wished I was Bill Gates."

PHOTOGRAPH BY LOUISE GUBB

A YEAR IN LOSERVILLE

LIKE A SERVING of *schadenfreude* with your New Year's bubbly? Consider, then, just a few of those glad to see the back of 2003—and gloat if you must. Near the top of such lists will be **Conrad Black**, press tycoon and aspiring historian, who now faces accusations of financial misconduct at his newspaper company, Hollinger International. Black, 59, might want to wait for kinder times before penning a sequel to his autobiography, *A Life in Progress*. In politics, we have **Sheila Copps**—out of federal cabinet after nine years of executive power and an excruciatingly unsuccessful run for the Liberal leadership. With her goes a coterie of Grit bench mates, including **David Collenette**, **Don Boudria** and **Stéphane Dion**. At the provincial level, **Ernie Eves** lost the Ontario election in a bungled campaign against Dalton McGuinty's Liberals. **Elwin Hermanson**, leader of the Saskatchewan Party, snatched defeat from the jaws of victory in the province's November election. And B.C. Premier **Gordon Campbell** made a nation cringe with that slappy-faced mug shot, which disgraced supper hour newscasts from coast to coast (note to premier: sometimes it really is better not to smile). From hockey, we have **Curtis Joseph**, a US$8 million-a-year goaltender who found himself on the bench, and the minor-league buses, after the Detroit Red Wings failed to find a team willing to shoulder part of his salary. Then there's the bizarre case of **Darlene Heatherington**, the Lethbridge, Alta., alderman who disappeared last May on a trip to Great Falls, Mont. She resurfaced three days later in Las Vegas with a sensational tale of abduction and rape. Police quickly savaged her story, and voters howled at her apparent duplicity. But while few spared a thought for Darlene, pity for her husband, Dave, seemed universal. CHARLIE GILLIS





Heatherington's tale was trashed; Copps (top) got demoted



A YEAR OF WINNERS

A historian, a singer, a golfer, and especially a fire chief well considered as the Canadians of the Year

THE SPIRIT OF KELOWNA

IT WAS FRIDAY night, Aug. 22, in the midst of an evacuation that would see 30,000 people—almost one-third of Kelowna—forced from their homes by the wind-driven Okanagan Mountain Provincial Park fire. In all, 238 homes would burn. It was hard to imagine things could get worse, until Kelowna Fire Chief Gerry Zimmermann took a call from Platoon Capt. Len Moody. The inferno had roared past, trapping fire crews and forcing the rest to regroup at Barnaby Road on Kelowna's southern edge. Moody warned that road, too, could fall, leaving the city at risk. They agreed they might have to bulldoze a neighbourhood to save the city.

"My heart thumped a couple of times," Zimmermann says. He asked operations staff to plot a fireguard and assemble heavy equipment. "There was such trust no one raised an eyebrow," he says. They were within an hour of flattening homes when the winds died. Meantime, crews cut off by flames continued battling house fires, uncertain of their own fate. Zimmermann, 54, would learn later that among those trapped firefighters was his 26-year-old son, Chris.

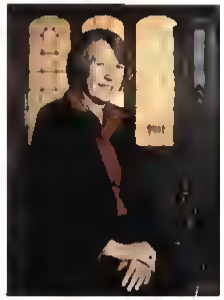
He tells these stories to make a point. Kelowna is rebuilding, but it takes time. "You suppress a lot of things because you do what you have to do," he says. "When it's over, the mind goes into rerun." He believes the city and the department have emerged stronger. "We've all learned how important people are—not things," he says. For many, the chief's daily fire briefings embodied the spirit of Kelowna. His blunt assessments came unfiltered. His emotions were like turbulent weather systems: occasional tears, with flashes of outrage and gales of laughter. He learned the value of such openness in another crisis—the death of his wife in a car crash seven years ago. "It helped prepare me," he says, "for what I went through here." His refuge is the hobby farm on the city's fringe where his children were raised. His eldest, Nikki, 28, is a teacher. Chris followed him into the department.

> "We've learned how important people are—not things," the chief says

Sarah, 22, is in university. Zimmermann is engaged to Sandy, the widow of a fireman killed years ago in a plane crash. They'll set a wedding date once life returns to normal.

He has rebuffed entreaties to seek a federal Liberal nomination, but he's accepted a long list of speaking engagements and fundraisers from clubs, aid agencies and churches. It's a chance to repay those who helped. The attention is flattering, but this was a "massive group effort," he says. "It was about thousands of people—I just happened to be the one who got to talk about it from time to time." KEN MACQUEEN

A NEW LOOK AT HISTORY



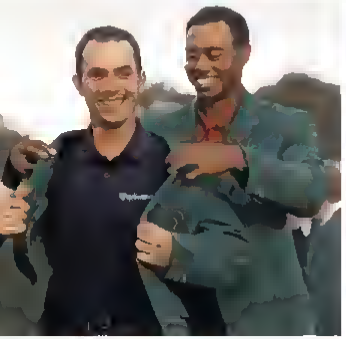
From rejection slips to prizes

IT SEEMED like a no-brainer to most publishers. A 570-page doorstop of a book by a relatively unknown Canadian historian, dealing not with war, but its unsexy aftermath. Reams of detail about feuding royals, petty bureaucrats and politicians carving up the remnants of empires. The rejection slips piled up in Margaret MacMillan's mailbox faster than grocery flyers. "I had difficulty finding a publisher anywhere—Canada, the U.S., Britain. It was an equal opportunity brush-off," says the University of Toronto professor, who turns 60 on Dec. 23. "Not that I blame them. It's a very unpromising subject, a bunch of men sitting around tables, conducting peace negotiations."

Modesty aside, the success of MacMillan's tome on the Paris Peace Conference, *Paris 1919: Six Months That Changed the World*, has decisively proven her doubters wrong. An international best seller, critics' darling, and winner of four major literary prizes, her lively reconstruction of one of history's greatest crossroads has resonated with readers in a way no one expected. "What a lot of people have said to me is that the book has helped them understand what is going on in the world today," MacMillan says in her book-filled office at Trinity College. "I think with the end of the Cold War, history suddenly became a lot more important, and issues we thought were dead and buried suddenly weren't." *Paris 1919*, the product of several years of research and writing, also gave MacMillan a new appreciation of her own history—David Lloyd George, the British prime minister and a key player at Versailles, was her great grandfather. "I think history has underestimated him," she says. "I came away very impressed. He was a great statesman."

MacMillan is hard at work on her next project, striving to again bring a Canadian perspective to bear on a watershed international event: Nixon's visit to China. "I think Canadians tend to try and see all the different sides of a question. We're fair minded," she says. This time, she already has a publisher. J.G.

CHUCK STOODY/CP (FAR LEFT, TOP); ADRIAN WYLD/CP. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER J. MORRIS (ABOVE). PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER HREIN/MACLEAN'S (OPPOSITE)



HE LIFTED OUR SPIRITS

WHEN HE won the Masters last April, Mike Weir did more than become the first Canadian man ever to win one of golf's major championships. The hard-working lefty from Bright's Grove, Ont., lifted our spirits. War was raging in Iraq, SARS was on its way to killing 44 Canadians and ravaging the economy, winter, one of the worst on record in many parts of the country, wasn't letting go. Then Weir, steely and composed, tapped in for victory and the fabled green jacket, and a nation of duffers rejoiced.

It was a life-changing event for Weir, too. That's reflected in the tournament coverage he now gets on U.S. networks that once ignored him, and in the reaction of Canadian fans, for whom his victory at Augusta National stands among the great events in the country's sporting history. But in his heart, he insists, he is unchanged. When asked for *his* list of favourite moments in 2003, right there with the Masters is having his 92-year-old grandfather attend the Bell Canadian Open in Hamilton last September—his most ardent supporter had never seen him play live. And even though he lives in Draper, Utah, with his wife, Bricia, and their two young daughters, Weir possesses qualities that we like to think are so Canadian: modesty, perseverence, being good in the corners.

And pragmatism. As defending Masters champion, he gets to choose the menu for the past-champions' dinner when the tournament returns to Augusta next April. That puts him on the spot: Weir's mother is Italian and he loves pasta and veal parmigiana, but Bricia is Mexican and he enjoys his tacos, too. So neither will feel slighted, he's leaning toward "a bit of both"—just what you'd expect, given the national predisposition for compromise. As well, to complement the cuisine, Weir promises to have "a few Canadian beers there for all the guys." For the taste, of course, and perhaps to put out the odd gastronomic fire.

JAMES DEACON



Twain in *haute*: Hair: Weir (top left) slips into his green jacket

LOOKING *UP!*

SHE MIGHT want to call the next album *Ubiquitous!* Years don't get much better than Shania Twain's 2003. She was on the cover of *Rolling Stone*, sang at the Super Bowl, hosted the Junos, had two major TV specials, received a slew of awards, and CBS is making a movie of her life. *Up!*, her comeback disc, has sold more than nine million copies. Now, she's our readers' choice for Canadian Entertainer of the Year.

ELISE AMENDOLA/AP (TOP LEFT), CHRISTINNE MUSCHI/REUTERS



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THE MACLEAN'S READERS' CHOICE

Brought to you by: CBCnewsWORLD

Over the past month readers logged on to www.macleans.ca to vote in our first *Readers' Choice* poll for the most significant news events and personalities in the fields of sport, entertainment and health in 2003

Trusted.
Connected.
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CBCnewsWORLD

THE RESULTS ARE IN

Your choice for news event that shook the country in 2003

1. **SARS** – The SARS health-care emergency was, by far, readers' top choice as the event that most shook the country. More than half of respondents ranked SARS as the most significant story, from the first ominous signs that the deadly respiratory ailment had spread to Canada in March, to the health-care crisis that paralyzed Toronto.

2. **The forest fires** – Through the summer of 2003, tinder dry forests in Western Canada ignited into wind-blown infernos threatening towns and cities like Kelowna, where thousands were evacuated and fires consumed hundreds of homes
3. **The blackout** – On the afternoon of August 14, cascading power failures crashed the electricity grid, plunging 50 million people into darkness in Ontario and seven U.S. states
4. **The mad cow** – When a single cow in Alberta was identified in May as having suffered from mad cow disease, the border slammed shut on Canada's $7.6-billion-a-year beef industry
5. **Vancouver's 2010 Olympic bid** – On July 2, the winning bid by Vancouver/Whistler to host the 2010 Winter Games was announced in Prague by the International Olympic Committee

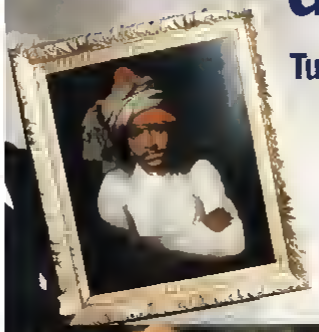
Other choices for top news event included: The war in Iraq • The court ruling opening legal status for same-sex marriage • Proposed amendments to decriminalize marijuana • Jean Chretien's retirement • The death of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan • The serial killing investigation on the B.C. pig farm of accused murderer Robert Pickton • The devastation caused by Hurricane Juan in Atlantic Canada in September

Thanks to all *Maclean's* readers who let their voices be heard!
For more results from the *Maclean's Readers' Choice* poll look through this issue of *Maclean's* or visit www.macleans.ca.

MACLEAN'S

There's something different on the air.

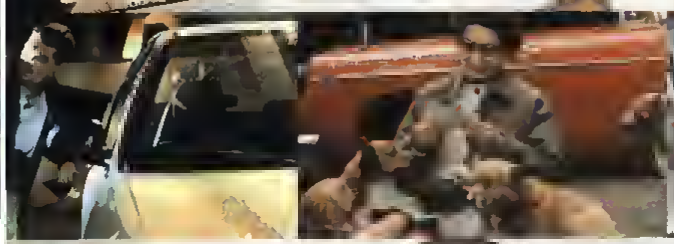
Tune in for special programming over the holidays.

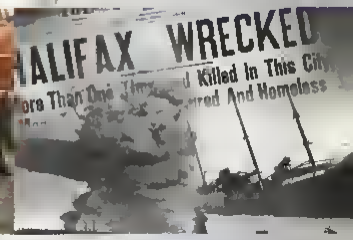


Antiques Roadshow 25th Anniversary Special
Wednesday, December 31
10 PM ET/PT



The Royals and Their Pets
On The Passionate Eye.
Sunday, December 28
10 PM ET/PT





Grand Theft Auto
Marketplace catches car thieves in the act.
Saturday, December 27
7 PM ET
Tuesday, December 30
8 PM ET

Diana's Dresses
A look at Diana's elegant attire as part of her lasting legacy.
On The Passionate Eye.
Monday, December 22
10 PM

Diana: The Night She Died
An investigation into the questions surrounding Diana's death on The Passionate Eye.
Monday, December 29
10 PM ET/PT



Legacy - The Halifax Explosion
The impact of the 1917 Halifax explosion.
Thursday, January 1
5 PM & 11 PM ET

Confessions of a Cad
Princess Di's former lover reveals a sordid side to life in the British upper class.
Sunday, December 28
11 PM

CBCnewsWORLD

cbc.ca/newsworld



BUMPY RIDE

Two decades of our annual soundings have tracked Canadians' growing sense of who we are, writes pollster ALLAN R. GREGG



AMONG SOCIAL commentators, it has become fashionable to declare that "everything changed after Sept. 11." But looking back over the two decades of our year-end *Maclean's* surveys, it is apparent that the Canadian outlook and mindset were undergoing profound changes long before that memorable and terrible day. When we began our annual investigation of public opinion across the nation in 1984, Canadians were coming out of a recession with a renewed sense of confidence. They had weathered the storm of rising unemployment and inflation, and felt they learned some valuable lessons from that experience. Among them was an emerging belief that we could not continue to rely so much on government, doing so would lay ourselves open to the very vulnerabilities we were trying to avoid.

We recognized that the country was facing ongoing problems—economic, social, constitutional—but saw these largely as aberrations that could be resolved with effort. Our optimism was also grounded in realism. We believed that "simply doing the same things, better," was not the way to go. With the Mulroney Conservatives freshly in power, new ideas, new approaches and new leadership were the order of the day. It was time for a change.

By the time of the divisive 1988 election, which the Tories won on a free trade platform, Canadians had realized that, while they desired change in the abstract, it didn't come without dislocation and new threats. In fact, events over the course of the Mulroney years—the GST, the failed Meech Lake and the Charlottetown constitutional accords—would see our poll respondents progressively losing faith in the architects of change. Cynicism toward politics and politicians escalated as Canadians saw their expectations of limitless progress dashed. Our polls' focus shifted to a stalled economy, revealing a public increasingly associating diminished opportunities with government intervention and bloated deficits. That set the stage for another change in 1993—the Chrétien Liberals virtually wiping the incumbent Conservatives off the political landscape.

The Quebec referendum of 1995 seized our attention in that year, but the after-effects faded quickly. Today, Quebecers express almost no angst about their place in Confederation. Meanwhile, concerns about the economy and government spending receded, earning Jean Chrétien three consecutive landslides and turning Paul Martin into an icon of fiscal stewardship. But a new phenomenon was emerging at the same time as Canadians were acknowledging the unprece

BY THE year 2000, health care and other social issues had come from nowhere to dominate the public opinion agenda

ILLUSTRATION BY JASON SCHNEIDER

More respondents cite 'health care' or 'hospitals' as the top issues facing the country than anything else, with Atlantic Canadians leading the way

Atlantic	37%
Ont.	28%
CANADA	27%
B.C.	25%
Alta.	25%
Sask./Man.	25%
Que.	24%

JOAN QUAINTANCE, 59, HAMMONDS PLAINS, N.S., RETIRED STATISTICS CANADA INTERVIEWER
"Our health care system has gone downhill considerably in the last 10 to 15 years. I told my husband, 'If I get sick, don't send me to the hospital.' I don't think they're running efficiently."

Asked about their personal finances, Albertans are the most likely to say their money situation has improved in the last 10 years

Alta.	42%
B.C.	41%
Ont.	41%
CANADA	38%
Atlantic	36%
Sask./Man.	36%
Que.	33%

BLAINE SWEET, 34, BEARBERRY, ALTA., MANAGER AT AN OIL RIG
"Alberta is one of the better provinces to get along in right now. I credit Ralph Klein for that—he's done a lot for the province. With the housing market up, I built a house eight years ago, sold it four years later and made a substantial amount of money."

dented economic growth, our year-end polling also showed a parallel belief that this prosperity was being unequally shared and, even more alarmingly, that our social fabric was starting to unravel.

By the year 2000, social issues (and most particularly, health care) dominated the public opinion agenda. In the mid-1990s it was the better-off, middle-aged men who most vocally expressed that era's fear of economic paralysis and government interference. But by the end of the decade, dissent was emanating from different quarters: the young, the old, the elderly, the poor and women—in short, the most likely casualties of a deteriorating social safety net.

To our surprise, the tragic events of Sept. 11, 2001, did not replace these concerns—they simply magnified them. In the immediate aftermath of the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, concerns about the economy rose. But a year later, these anxieties were back to pre-9/11 levels. Worries about social questions and our health-care system retreated in 2001, but then re-emerged in the subsequent 12 months. As expected, we initially encountered increased worries about terrorism and international threats, but even with the events fresh in their minds, fewer than one in five Canadians declared those issues the most important facing the country. Now, terrorism gets barely a mention.

OUR expanding sense of being different from the Americans gives us a more outward, more confident nationalism

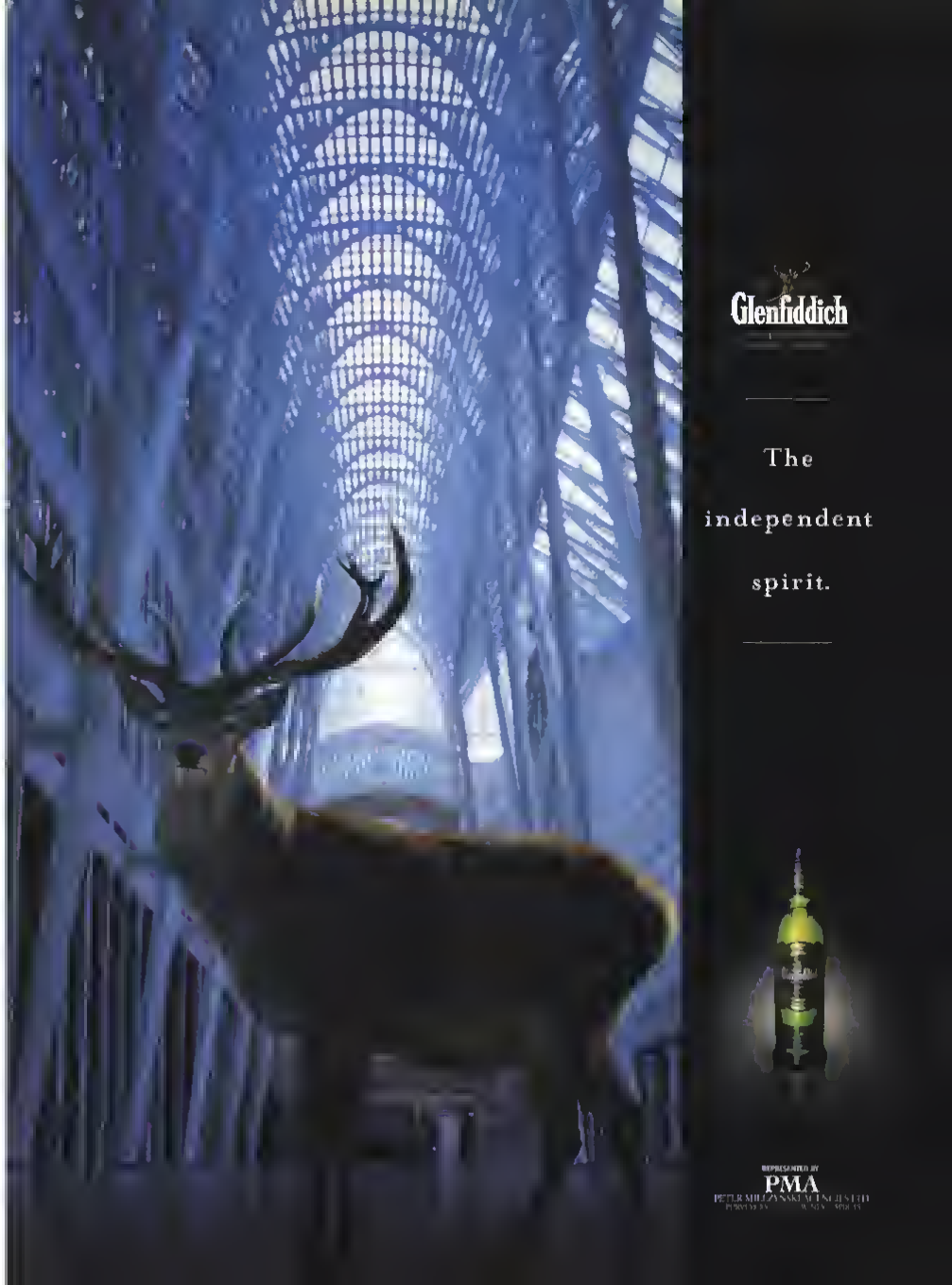
Today, the Canadian public opinion landscape is more multi-layered than ever. Consequently, it is also a more difficult one to address, politically. We believe the nation, and our world, face more, and more varied, problems than they have in the past. But we have also come to accept that there is no single solution to allay all our concerns. So, far from recovering since Sept. 11, the public mood has actually deteriorated. What could be called a sense of joyless prosperity is causing us to re-evaluate our priorities. We have little appetite for old-style interventionist government. But we're more open-minded regarding the prospect of government—in a less intrusive, more facilitating and creative way—once again serving as a vehicle to advance our collective interests. Similarly, at an individual level, we are searching for more meaning in our lives and questioning whether unbridled materialism is a worthwhile quest.

The past year, in many ways, looks like the year Canada stood still. With the political agenda placed on hold as we awaited the leadership change in Ottawa, we have seen only minute shifts in public opinion over the last year. The one glaring exception to this wait-and-see posture relates to our view of and relations with the world. It now appears that 9/11 not only shook us out of our complacent sense of security, it also opened our eyes to a complex, dangerous and needy world. Indeed, I don't think it would be an exaggeration to say that we have learned more about the world and international affairs in the past 27 months than we did in the previous 27 years. And that knowledge and understanding have led us to conclude that Canadians and Americans see the world through dramatically different prisms. This expanding sense of being different appears to have a side effect—a new, more outward, more confident nationalism. For example, for the past two years we've found a majority of Canadians wanting to upgrade our military. This seems to be not simply from a desire for greater military might, but from a realization that if we are to exert our unique sensibilities on the world, we have to participate in it more actively.

Twenty years of probing the national psyche have demonstrated repeatedly that Canadians have a strong sense of who they are. Events—even those as monumental as Sept. 11—only serve to better define the essential character of our culture. At the same time, we have gone in stages from expecting government to be not just the arbiter but often the provider of the public good, to turning our back on public-sector solutions, to seeking a more focused role for government as a protector of the weak and a facilitator of the strong. Where we once welcomed short-term solutions, we now accept the complexity of the difficulties we confront. Twenty years ago we believed we had little impact on the rest of the world and the world had only a modest impact on us. Our eyes have been opened to a fragile, troubled and often threatening planet, one for which we have to accept more responsibility.

The harsh realities of the last two decades have forced us down a path to a better understanding of our unique identity as a nation, and a re-evaluation of what is important for us as individuals, as citizens and a country. As with most journeys, the discoveries along the way have made the trip worthwhile. M

Allan R. Gregg is chairman of the Toronto-based consulting firm The Strategic Counsel which conducts the year-end poll for *Maclean's*.



JUST SAY YES

Marijuana. Same-sex marriage. Staying out of Iraq. Divisive issues, yes, but also a source of a new national pride in the kind of nation we're becoming, says CHARLIE GILLIS.

IT'S NOT LIKE we suddenly got all kissy-kissy or anything. As 2003 wound down, you could still belly up to pretty much any bar in the country and get a decent argument going about dope, or same-sex marriage, or whether we should have joined the war in Iraq. These were our homegrown hot buttons, right? Issues that pitted young against old, right versus left, religious versus non in ways that should scare any sane politician out of his wits. Only a prime minister lurching to the end of a long, uninterrupted reign—consumed by thoughts of legacy and happy to plant land mines in his successor's path—would tackle them head-on.

How, then, did they become wellsprings of national pride? Far from depicting a country riven by matters of deep moral import, the 20th annual *Maclean's* year-end poll suggests the nation's most divisive issues are somehow bringing us together. Fully 58 per cent of respondents express pride in Canada's decisions to allow same-sex marriage and decriminalize possession of small amounts of marijuana, while three-quarters applaud Ottawa's decision not to join the invasion of Iraq. This after a year of hand-wringing in which, on all three fronts, we weighed the potential cost of alienating Uncle Sam. In the case of gay marriage, numerous polls have found Canadians to be evenly split, a sign of the constituency pressures that have led several government backbenchers to break ranks. But have we been pulling out our hair for nothing? "Everybody may have different opinions in these situations," shrugs poll participant Mario Hogan, a 59 year-old safety training officer from New Waterford, N.S. "But I'm thankful we have a government that says we're not just going to follow the leader"—meaning our powerful southern neighbour.

On one level, this sounds like classic Canadian contrarianism. Robert Wolfe, an expert in Canada-U.S. relations at Queen's University, calls this "the narcissism of small differences"—a Freudian phrase that would ascribe less-than-lofty motives to our chest-thumping. "Anything we can find that proves the point that we're not American, we exaggerate and become proud of," Wolfe says. "In the case of marijuana and same-sex marriage, these things make us look cool and trendy, and the Americans look religious and stodgy."

But the poll suggests our current sentiment goes beyond mere petulance. Yes, respondents are proud to have a few distinctly Canadian policies. But their enthusiasm is tempered by sensitivity to American security concerns—and a surprising willingness to accommodate those fears. Sixty-one per cent find a North American perimeter, with the two countries sharing immigration and border-crossing laws, an acceptable means of placating Washington. Even more think it is a good idea for Prime Minister Paul Martin to invite George W. Bush to Ottawa to mend the countries' fractured relationship. "The two governments have to get together," says Ronald Triffo, 64, an Edmonton accountant. "There's no sense trying to do things separately."

Moreover, the results cut across regional boundaries, which suggests a form of national consensus not common in Canadian public opinion. That three-quarters of Atlantic Canadians say they support the decision to sit out the war in Iraq probably won't surprise you. That 60 per cent of Albertans feel the same way just might. And the most curious

PERCENTAGE FINDING VARIOUS OPTIONS FOR IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH THE U.S. ACCEPTABLE

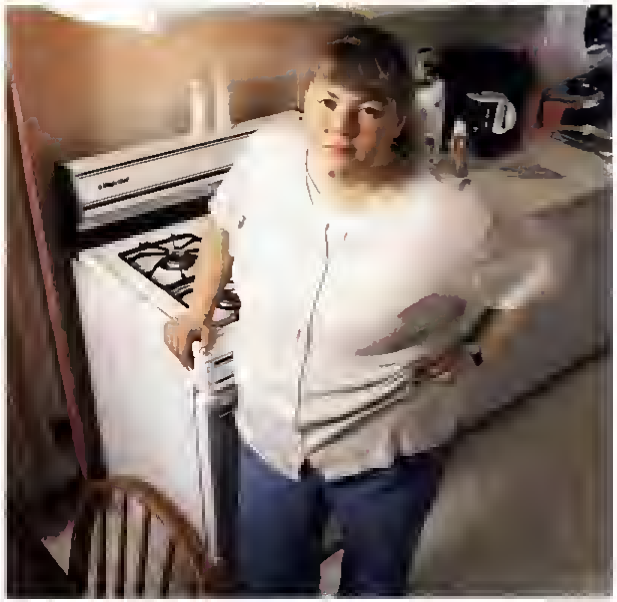
Invite President Bush to Ottawa to discuss relationship	85
Appoint special ambassador to explore ways of working with U.S. in dealing with terrorism	80
Agree to common immigration and border-crossing laws	61
Allow the export of fresh water to U.S.	42
Provide additional funding for Iraq	41
Drop policies such as changes to the marijuana laws	40
Drop our trade cases before the NAFTA trade tribunal	39
Commit troops to Iraq	33



ILLUSTRATION BY JASON SCHNEIDER

HOW THE POLL WAS DONE

The results in this report are based on a national telephone survey of 1,200 adult Canadians, aged 18 or older, conducted by Toronto-based The Strategic Counsel. Interviews took place between Nov. 3 and Nov. 13. The margin of error for the national sample is plus or minus 2.9 percentage points, 19 times out of 20. Accuracy ranges are wider within regional, provincial or other subgroups (e.g., men and women). In some cases "don't know" and "no answer" results are not shown. See complete results of the poll on-line at *www.macleans.ca/webspecials*



NDP supporters, even in Alberta, are most likely to say **Paul Martin *should* spend where he has to, even if it means running a deficit**



TRENNA STOTT, 29, EDMONTON, CHILD CARE PROVIDER AND NDP BACKER
"It doesn't matter who's in charge—it could be Joe Blow—they're going to run a deficit anyway. They're going to spend money no matter how much we beg them not to. And if they're going to spend, I'd like them to spend on social programs, schools, medical care, the military. That would be good. I'm a military wife with my husband in Afghanistan."

responses came from Quebec, where people are most likely of all to—get ready—*commend* Ottawa for setting its own course. Fully 90 per cent endorse the government's decision not to join the war, while nearly seven out of 10 side with the statement that Canada's decision to tinker with pot and marriage laws "makes them proud" because it shows how socially progressive and diverse Canadian society can be (page 38). Somewhere out there, Pierre Trudeau is smiling.

So did Jean Chrétien stumble upon the solution to Canadian disunity in the waning days of his final mandate? Not so fast, says Louis Bélanger, a political scientist at Laval University in Montreal. While Ottawa's position on drugs and same-sex marriage might delight many Quebecers, that hardly equals a shift in basic political philosophy, he notes. "This response is much more indicative of Quebecers' stance on the issues themselves," Bélanger says. "It may have a short-term effect [on national unity], but I don't see it as an important factor—yet." Recall, too, that Quebec nationalism emerged as a political force during the late 1960s and early '70s—just as Trudeau was shooing the state from the bedrooms of the nation. If a few progressive policies were all it took to win over French Canada, then the Parti Québecois probably wouldn't exist today.

As for the rest of Canada, well, we still have lots to argue about. Albertans show a greater desire to vote for the united right-wing party than respondents from other provinces. Ontarians seem as wedded as ever to the federal Liberals, with some 46 per cent identifying them as the party they feel closest to. The country also appears evenly split on whether the new Prime Minister should run a deficit: 62 per cent of Atlantic Canadians say they approve of the measure if necessary; 58 per cent of Albertans feel the opposite. Other regions are almost perfectly divided.

A lingering insecurity about fiscal issues speaks to a powerful undercurrent in the national mood, which policy makers would be foolish to ignore. Subsumed within the hype about pot and Iraq are responses suggesting we're *not* so chuffed with ourselves that we've shed our sense of caution. To wit: more of us are pessimistic about the future than optimistic—a condition that has persisted since 2001 despite the country's generally healthy economy. That might explain why we remain preoccupied with bread-and-butter matters like social programs and the national debt, rather than the things that fill cable news programs. All that stuff you've been reading about terrorism and Canada's role in the world? Forget it. If you want to know what Canadians really care about, ask them about health care, unemployment or the economy. *Plus ça change.*

All of this should serve as handy guidance for Martin, who has been waxing on about reforming Parliament, fixing the First Nations governance legislation and improving relations with the United States. Those

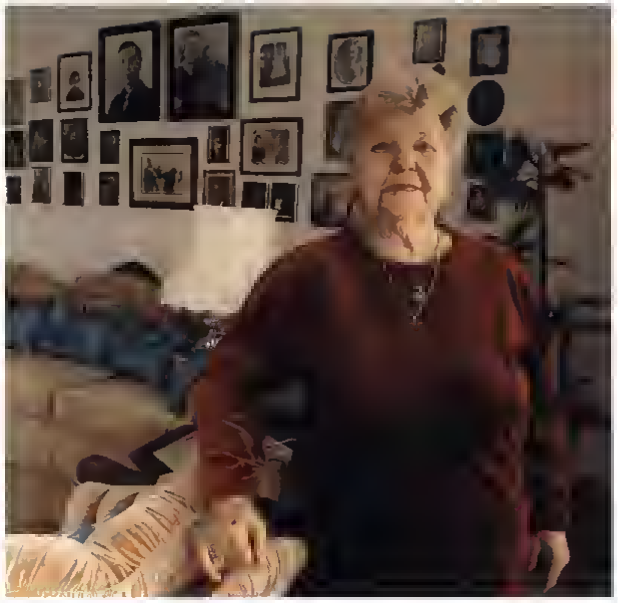
53% of Albertans would vote for the newly merged Conservative party, compared to 26% nationally

PHOTOGRAPH BY IAN JACKSON



Given a list of potential candidates, Ontarians and Prairie respondents are most likely to offer no choice as to who should lead the newly merged Conservative Party

Sask./Man.	35%
Ont.	35%
B.C.	32%
CANADA	31%
Alta.	28%
Que.	29%
Atlantic	26%



SOPHIA MALARCZYK, 73, ANGUS, ONT., HOUSEWIFE

"As far as I'm concerned, all politicians lie. You can't believe what any of them are saying. Once they get into power, they change everything around. They're all the same. No one is any worse than the others. I'm a Liberal, but next time I'm going to vote for the Conservatives so that all the power doesn't end up with one party. There's got to be competition."

messages helped Martin contrast himself with Chretien, who was taking criticism for his handling of all three policy areas. But when asked what they want to see at the top of Martin's to-do list, Canadians are far more interested in sound management than bold policy adventures. Improving social programs comes first in the poll (35 per cent), while reducing Canada's $510-billion debt rates a clear second (25). "We just need to look after each other," says graphic artist Mary Deak, 45, from Penticton, B.C. "These things are the backbone of our country." Giving a greater role to MPs, investing in cities, and U.S. rapprochement all rate in single digits.

This emphasis on vital programs and sound finances doesn't surprise Trevor Harrison, a political sociologist at Alberta's University of Lethbridge. "Despite newspaper columnists and politicos talking about these other issues, Canadians tend to be very focused on the here-and-now practicalities," he says. "That means we're still concerned about education and health care." That's the part of us that earns the ho-hum label, like dutiful, Aesopian ants preparing for winter. But the upside of being boring is your neighbours' shocked reaction when you try something remotely original. A couple of years back, the U.S. satirical weekly *The Onion* ran a headline mocking both Canadian blandness and American myopia when it comes to life north of the border. "Perky Canada," it read, "has own government, laws." The joke might not apply any more as the U.S. media alternately coo about "Canadian cool" and slap our wrist for our audacity, while American liberals look on with envy. Their admiration won't change our basic values, which have always tended toward home and hearth. But for the first time in a long while, we've got something we can feel proud of. M

SOMETHING IN THE RUM

Our year-end poll has compiled two decades of evidence that the windswept, fogbound province off the East Coast is . . . hot.

1985: "As in the 1984 poll, respondents from Newfoundland reported themselves to be both more sexually active and satisfied than those from any other province."

1988: "For the fifth straight year, more Newfoundland respondents described themselves as sexually active (77 per cent) than did residents of any other province."

1997: "Prodded for an explanation, Rick Mercer of CBC-TV's *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* is at a loss for words. Could it be that there is simply little else to do on the Rock? Mainlander claptrap, responds Mercer. 'They're just jealous.' "

2002: Slipping to second place behind Quebec, Newfoundlanders are up to the challenge. "We'll embrace the project and regain our rightful crown," vows St. John's native Seamus O'Regan, host of CTV's *Canada AM*. "I, for one, am ready to go back and do my part."

THE RISE AND FALL: SOME YEARS ARE JUST SEXIER THAN OTHERS
Percentages reporting an active sex life

	'84	'85	'86	'87	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'02
Nfld.	76	75	75	88	73	75	64	78	77	75	69	74	66
Canada	74	73	69	59	62	62	59	65	64	70	59	58	62

Source: Strategic Counsel analysis



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

CANADA, OUI

Quebecers have the strongest sense of pride in the country's emerging values

WE ARE NOT too sure how it happened, but it was fast. Canada seems to have morphed into some kind of Sweden-in-America: a leftish, debonair, tolerant country, and a tad smug about it too. We supported the Kyoto agreement aiming at reducing air pollution, and opposed joining the U.S. forces in Iraq. Gay couples from New York and California come to Canada to marry, citizens of Buffalo and Seattle drive north to buy cheap medicine, and smoking a joint is not such a big deal here any more. Now, this: where do we find the highest level of enthusiasm for this new, cool Canada?

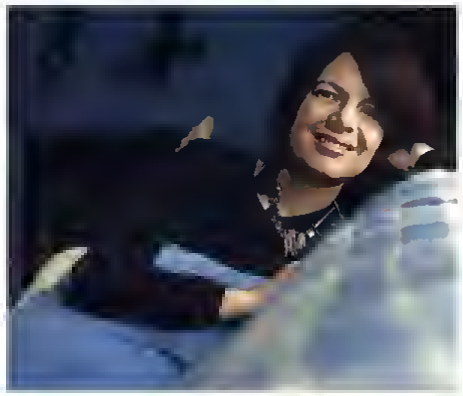
In Quebec!

Our poll finds Quebecers more likely than other Canadians to say these recent social developments have made them "proud to be Canadians." Sixty-nine per cent of them endorse the statement that they're proud of what Canada's becoming "because it shows what a socially progressive and diverse country we live in." In the rest of Canada, that number averages out to 54 per cent. That kind of spread calls for a double take. "This is big, quite big," says Allan Gregg, chairman of The Strategic Counsel, which conducts our year-end polls. What it suggests, he adds, is that "the rest of Canada seems more acceptable to the average Quebecer now."

Other poll findings seem to support that thesis. For starters, the national unity issue, that perennial buzzword for the Canadian psychodrama of the past 40 years, has all but dropped off the radar. Only two per cent of Quebecers (and virtually no one elsewhere in Canada) consider it a major issue now. Too bad for those few hard-nosed separatists who cringe at the spectre of federal intervention, but Quebecers are far more inclined than other Canadians to urge Ottawa to focus on improving social programs.

Furthermore, Quebecers seem to blend in nicely with the national average on a wide range of issues and concerns. They're no more or less optimistic or confident than other Canadians, and they share roughly the same views on what our national priorities should be. It would be risky to conclude that Quebecers identify fully with English-speaking Canada, says Gregg, but "what is emerging clearly is a greater affinity based on values."

Then there's Iraq. Quebecers are by far the least likely to approve of sending troops there as a way of improving relations with the U.S. To grasp this new situation, it helps to remember that Montrealers staged some of the world's largest anti-war rallies last winter. And that the prime minister who held fast against George W. Bush, Jean Chrétien, is a Quebecer—as is Martin Cauchon, the cabinet minister who manned the front line in the debates over allowing gay marriage and decriminalizing pot. Come to think of it, Chrétien successor Paul Martin, NDP leader Jack Layton (born in and raised near Montreal), and of course Bloc Québécois head Gilles Duceppe, are also closely tied to this province. Small wonder, then, that Canada seems, increasingly, to be to Quebecers' liking. M



Quebecers are most likely to cite **improvements in social programs among the new Prime Minister's top two priorities.**



69% in Quebec say the new approaches to same-sex marriage and marijuana reflect well on Canada

MANON JULIEN, 31, PRÉVOST, QUE., PRIMARY SCHOOL DRAMA TEACHER

"If we start by offering good health care, people will be more productive at work. It solves problems by getting to the bottom of things. The government doesn't seem to think that way, they don't see the economic returns. But this is long-term, it's investing in health and family programs. In the long run, these people will be more productive members of society."

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINE MUSCHI

CAN YOU TELL WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS DRINK?

You can't see or taste the hepatitis virus in your drink. And that's just one of the many ways that over a million vacationing Canadians face hepatitis risk every year – even at the best tropical resorts. The World Health Organization (WHO) considers that all of Mexico and the Caribbean islands (including Cuba) are high-risk areas for acquiring hepatitis A. Hepatitis A and B are serious liver diseases that can sometimes be fatal. Once infected, you could easily spread the illness to others back home, even before you know you're sick.

Why take the chance?

Only Twinrix® gives you and your family simple, long-term protection from both hepatitis A and B. So see your doctor about Twinrix® and stay healthy.



the pineapple is O.K.

the cherry is O.K.

the punch is O.K.

the 2nd ice cube may contain a hepatitis virus

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The Only Dual Protection Against Hepatitis

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IMAGES 2003

The war in Iraq dominated, but forest fires, mad cow disease, SARS, a mega-blackout and Hurricane Juan grabbed our attention too

THE YEAR ENDED much the way it started—with the focus on Iraq. During the first two months of 2003, the drumbeats grew ever louder in the lead-up to the invasion of the Middle Eastern country. In December, Iraqis rejoiced—and George W. Bush and Tony Blair heaved a sigh of relief—over the dramatic capture of Saddam Hussein.

In the months between was the sad, brutal reality of the war itself. Without the support of the United Nations (Canada's stated reason for sitting this one out), Bush had to rely on a "coalition of the willing" to join U.S. troops in Iraq. His chief ally, Blair, paid a high price for his staunch support: the British prime minister's popularity at home sank like a stone.

As the months wore on with no discovery of weapons of mass destruction—the ostensible reason for the invasion—Bush, too, faced an increasingly restless populace. And even though he had declared the hostilities over on May 1, fighting continued. By the time Saddam was captured on Dec. 13—hiding in a hole in the ground near his hometown of Tikrit—455 U.S. soldiers had been killed and thousands more wounded.

The big question now is what is to be done with Saddam? Should he be tried by an international tribunal for crimes against humanity, or at home by the people he treated so brutally for the 24 years he was in power? And what price should he pay?

Bush's call for Saddam to face the "ultimate penalty" had little resonance elsewhere, certainly not with European leaders—including Blair—who oppose the death penalty. And while he had no objection to killing the ousted dictator, Abdel Aziz al-Hakim, the president of the Iraqi Governing Council, said Iraqis want Saddam tried by the country's newly established special tribunal. "What is important is for Iraqis to take charge in trying Saddam," he said, but added, "it is possible for the international community to take part."

JEROME DELAY/AP; U.S. ARMY/REUTERS (OPPOSITE)

SADDAM TOPPLED
On Apr. 9, a statue of the dictator was pulled down. Eight months later, U.S. soldiers nabbed the man.

IMAGES2003







CANADIANS IN KABUL

Canada's mission in Afghanistan—our main contribution to the U.S.-led war on terror—seemed calm enough in August, when a soldier from the Royal Canadian Regiment, 3rd Battalion, patrolled the base outside Kabul (top left). But on Oct. 2, two months later, the situation turned lethal when Sgt. Robert Short of Fredericton and Cpl. Robbie Beerenfenger of Ottawa were killed when their vehicle was blown up.

THE U.S. IN IRAQ

In spite of the turmoil, American troops, too, had the odd quiet moment. In April, soldiers paused briefly following their search of one of Saddam Hussein's Baghdad palaces (bottom left). In March, U.S. Marines took the time to give an Iraqi soldier some water (opposite).

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ITSUO INOUYE/AP; TOM HANSON/CP; JOHN MOORE/AP



UNHOLY FLAMES

B.C. had a fire season to remember: 2,474 blazes between April and October. The result was three lives lost, 266,000 hectares destroyed, and damage estimated at $500 million. 'People describe it like a 747 parked in the backyard,' said rancher Anja Mitchell of Barrière, B.C., talking about the unearthly roar of the fire that destroyed dozens of homes in the area. Praising the heroic efforts of those who fought the flames, Kelowna Fire Chief Gerry Zimmermann said, 'You stood your ground and at one point, when it looked like our world was coming down, I thought I lost some of you. But we didn't. Thank God we didn't.'

GARY NYLANDER/KELOWNA DAILY COURIER/CP

IMAGES2003

WILD WINDS
Weather experts say Hurricane Juan, which killed two when it barrelled into Atlantic Canada, was a sign of more ferocious storms to come.

The Canadian Association of Gastroenterology asks,

"Are you one of the millions of Canadians who suffer from stomach, bowel or liver disorders?"

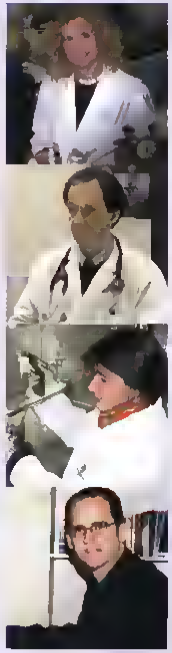
Diarrhea

Stomach Pains

Heartburn

Constipation





In the midst of her fellowship in paediatric gastroenterology at the Hospital for Sick Children in Toronto **Dr. Nicola Jones** had a revelation. In order to solve the mysteries related to the diseases afflicting her patients she would require extensive research training. The realization led her to enrol in a PhD programme under the guidance of Dr Philip Sherman in the Department of Molecular and Medical Genetics at the University of Toronto.

"There is still much we don't understand about *Helicobacter pylori*," says Dr Jones, who completed her degree to become assistant professor in the Departments of Paediatrics and Physiology at the University of Toronto and a paediatric gastroenterologist at the Hospital for Sick Children. Dr Jones and her research team are trying to understand how this bacterium, which lives in the stomach of approximately half of the world's population, manages to elude the body's normal defence systems to cause diseases such as stomach cancer and peptic ulcers. "My hope is that our work will lead to better treatments for the severe consequences associated with this infection," notes Jones.



In addition to her "laboratory kids" – the undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate students training under her supervision – Dr. Jones dedicates her time to her family, including her husband and two children, Finnegan, aged two, and ten month-old Bronwynn.

Dr. Michael Beyak's fascination with gastrointestinal physiology evolved when he was a student at Queen's University in Kingston, Ontario. "Experiencing science first-hand at an early stage really helped shape my career," says Beyak. During medical school and residency at the University of Toronto he sustained his research interests. "My earlier investigational experience, combined with supportive mentors at the University of Toronto enabled me to remain active in research during physician training."

After a year as a CAG Fellow in the Gastrointestinal Diseases Research Unit (GIDRU) at Queen's, the 34-year-old father of two is completing postgraduate training at the University of Sheffield in England, with Professors David Grundy and Annemarie Suprenant, studying the nerves that connect the gut to the brain. "Within the intestine there are millions of nerves regulating its function without help from or recognition by, the brain. Very few nerves communicate specifically with the brain. Nonetheless, we are aware of many important events such as pain and fullness after a meal," says Beyak. His studies examine how signals from the gut get to the brain through these nerves. Dr Beyak hopes that this pursuit will lead to a better understanding of gastrointestinal pain as well as regulation of food intake – a matter of increasing importance, given rising rates of obesity. He will return shortly to the GIDRU at Queen's an internationally recognized centre of excellence in gastrointestinal research and training.



Why Worry About Digestive Diseases?

Kevin hadn't planned to see a doctor about his persistent heartburn and difficulty swallowing. After all, he thought, it was probably caused by his unhealthy food choices and stress. But when he realized he was avoiding his favourite activities and missing work, Kevin decided to see his doctor. Like many of us, he wasn't comfortable talking about his symptoms, but he feared it was something serious — maybe even cancer.

Kevin was lucky – it wasn't cancer. But it was serious. Kevin has dyspepsia, which refers to a group of symptoms that originate in the upper digestive tract. These can include heartburn, regurgitation, bloating, nausea, fullness and/or pain in the upper abdomen. Dyspepsia is often caused by acid from the stomach refluxing back up into the esophagus. In Kevin's case, acid was damaging the lining of his esophagus, but fortunately there are effective treatments.

Kevin isn't alone — 29% of Canadians suffer from dyspepsia. And dyspepsia is only one of many digestive diseases.

Digestive disease is a general term that encompasses all disorders of the digestive system, which begins with the mouth and spans the esophagus, stomach, small intestine, gallbladder, liver, pancreas, colon and rectum. You may have heard of some of these disorders, such as Crohn's disease, hepatitis, acid reflux and irritable bowel syndrome (IBS). But how much do you really know about digestive diseases?

Kevin's story illustrates a some common misconceptions. Would you know fact from fiction?

Digestive problems are caused by poor eating habits and stress

FALSE. While it is advisable to live healthfully in most cases, digestive diseases are just that – diseases – with underlying biological causes.

Digestive diseases are the biggest healthcare problem in Canada

TRUE. Digestive diseases cost the Canadian healthcare system more than any other type of disorder, including cardiovascular (CV) disease and cancers! A total of 15.7% of the healthcare budget is spent on digestive problems, compared with 14.4% for CV and 6.3% for cancers.

Digestive diseases aren't serious

FALSE. Did you know?

- Tumours of the digestive system are more common than any other type of tumour.
- Digestive disease is the most common diagnosis, apart from cancer, in patients discharged from hospital.
- Patients with dyspepsia experience increased anxiety, depressed mood and decreased vitality – even more than patients with congestive heart failure.
- Dyspepsia, like other digestive diseases, can be more than just troublesome symptoms – without even knowing it, many patients have damage to their digestive system which warrants medical attention.

While they may not have the high profile of heart disease or stroke, digestive diseases are prevalent, debilitating and costly. Given their devastating impact on Canadians, you may be even more shocked to learn that government financing of education and research in the area has actually decreased 27% over the past decade.

Does a digestive disease affect you or someone you love? What if medical research could find a cure?

Introducing the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology – Supporting Gastrointestinal Research

Since its inception in 1962, the Canadian Association of Gastroenterology (CAG) has grown into an impressive and diverse membership that numbers over 1,000. Gastroenterologists, paediatricians, surgeons, radiologists, clinical and basic scientists, nurses and graduate students are just some of the experts that comprise the Association. Members are united by the common desire to support research and professional education in digestive health and disease, in order to improve the quality of life of Canadians.

In 1992, the CAG launched a programme to promote excellence in Canadian gastrointestinal research. Supported by industry partners and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) – the federal agency that oversees health research – the programme solicited proposals for research in gastrointestinal health and diseases from junior MD and PhD scientists. Scoring of proposals by an expert panel ensures that only the most promising, scientifically sound research is funded. The aims of the programme are to advance the understanding and treatment of digestive diseases and to nurture the brightest young Canadian scientists. While all partners had high hopes, few could have foreseen just how successful the **CAG-CIHR-Industry Partner Research Programme** would become.

Research Programme Graduates in Demand Worldwide

From a single research award granted in 1992, the Programme has mushroomed to twenty awards offered in 2003. Between 1992 and 2002, 87 scientists were supported by a total research investment of over $8.7 million. It is impressive that 63% of those who have completed their training have secured university teaching positions. Two-thirds of these teach at Canadian universities, thus expanding the breadth and quality of research offered in this country. One third has gone on to teach at key universities and institutions around the world, attesting to the excellence of the training they received in Canada.

"The CAG is very excited by what this Programme has achieved, thanks to the support of all partners," says Dr. Philip Sherman, President of the CAG, Professor at the Hospital for Sick Children, University of Toronto and Canada Research Chair in Gastrointestinal Disease.

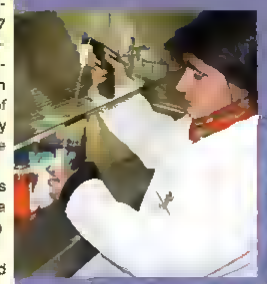
Dr. Derek McKay is Chairperson of the CAG Research Committee and Associate Professor of Pathology and Molecular Medicine at McMaster University in Hamilton. He notes that "One of the most rewarding aspects of the research programme is seeing young scientists who trained in the CAG-CIHR-Industry Partner Research Programme become mentors of the next generation." Dr. Nathalie Vergnolle, University of Calgary, Dr. David Armstrong, McMaster University, and Dr. Nicola Jones, University of Toronto, featured here, are three such success stories – previous Programme trainees, now with university teaching positions and established research careers, who supervise their own trainees.

When **Dr. David Armstrong** left a research position at 3 Arrows to do a residency at McMaster University, Hamilton in 1992, it was something of a gamble for the physician and his family. In addition to [illegible] years in Labrador as a family physician, he had already completed his internal medicine and gastroenterology training in the United Kingdom after graduating from Cambridge University and London's [illegible] College Hospital. The thought of another [illegible] years specialist training in Canada was off putting," says Armstrong, "but the prospect of working in one of the world's top gastroenterology research units really made the decision for me."



With the Canadian Fellowship behind him, a three-year CAG-CIHR-AstraZeneca Research Initiative Award in 1995 gave Dr. Armstrong the chance to study the cause and treatment of symptoms in gastrointestinal tract disorders such as gastroesophageal reflux disease (GERD) and dyspepsia. As a result of this, and with the mentorship of Professors Stephen Collins and Richard Hunt at McMaster University, Armstrong has gone on to clinical research with national and international studies on GERD, dyspepsia and *Helicobacter pylori* (a cause of ulcer disease). "Although we have learned a lot about some gastrointestinal diseases, there is much still to be discovered about these other common conditions that affect so many," explains Armstrong. "The support that I have received has provided a wonderful opportunity for me to carry out research that is both fascinating and relevant to my patients. Looking back, that gamble in 1992 really paid off for me, my wife and my family," says the father of five sons.

Dr. Nathalie Vergnolle, who confesses that ever since she was a small child, she has been "intrigued by the mechanisms of life," is an assistant professor in the Department of Pharmacology and Therapeutics at the University of Calgary's Faculty of Medicine.



According to the 35-year-old native of Agen, France, who earned her BSc, MSc and PhD in biological sciences at Paul Sabatier University in Toulouse, the main purpose of her current research is to better understand the intricacies of inflammation and pain. "Specifically, my goal is to determine whether certain complex molecules called proteinases, which are highly present in the intestinal tract, are involved in inflammation and visceral pain," says Vergnolle. "If I discover this is the case – and we have good evidence it could be – I will then have the opportunity to develop new drugs that would be helpful in the treatment of chronic conditions such as inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD) or even to relieve abdominal pain of patients suffering from irritable bowel syndrome (IBS)."

Dr. Vergnolle, who spends her non-working hours in the company of her husband and her five- and two-year-old children, is happy to be in Canada today. "The reality is that there is much more opportunity and support to do basic research in Canada than there is in France," she [illegible]

Canadian Research Is Top-Notch

Two indicators of the Programme's contributions to science are the number and importance of the research articles published. The CAG-CIHR-Industry Partner Research Programme has excelled by both criteria, with over 176 original research articles published in highly regarded scientific periodicals.

How Is Government Helping?

The CIHR is a key partner in the Programme, providing dollar-per dollar matching of funds contributed by sponsors such as pharmaceutical companies. Since inception of the Programme in 1992, the CIHR has contributed a sizeable $3.2 million.

Industry and Other Partners – Making Research Reality

The brand-name pharmaceutical industry has been an essential and active partner in gastrointestinal research in Canada. Without drug and medical instrument companies, and charitable organizations to provide financing, there would be no significant funding for the government to match – and no CAG-CIHR-Industry Partner Research Programme. All funding is "unrestricted" meaning that partners do not specify how the money is spent. Rather, the CAG Research Committee and the CIHR determine which projects will be funded based on scientific merit.

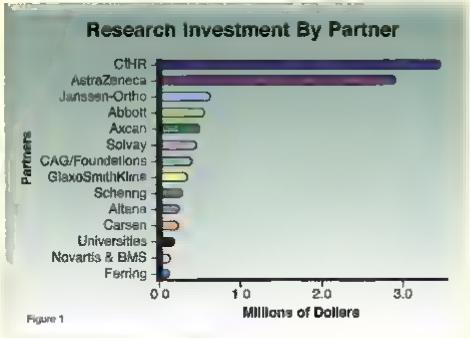


Figure 1

As can be seen in Figure 1, the many partners who have supported the Programme have, as a group, contributed in excess of $5.5 million.

Supporting Patients – The Canadian Digestive Health Foundation

While research and educational initiatives of the CAG are directed towards physicians and other professionals, the Association recognizes the importance of supporting patients with digestive diseases. To this end, the CAG has partnered with the Canadian Digestive Health Foundation (CDHF), a national registered charity. Formed in 1991, the main goal of the CDHF is to promote public awareness and education regarding digestive health and diseases. On the CDHF Web site *(http://www.cdhf.ca)* visitors can peruse an ever-growing library on various digestive diseases or participate in interactive programmes and bulletin boards. Digestive disease brochures and patient newsletters are also available for those without Internet access.

Medical Research – Finding Answers

Research has made exciting advancements in the fight against digestive diseases. The discovery in 2001 of a gene linked to Crohn's disease offers new hope that a cure may be closer than ever before. Despite breakthroughs, a great deal remains to be done. Some of the areas where research is needed include:

Colon cancer is the third most common cancer, but may be prevented or even cured if found early. Unfortunately, access to colonoscopy, the definitive method of detection, is not possible with current resources. Research is required to provide improved screening methods and appropriate access to colonoscopy.

Irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) – This difficult-to-diagnose disorder affects at least 15% of the population and is characterized by chronic abdominal pain associated with bowel movements. IBS is poorly understood and patients currently have limited treatment options.

CANADIAN DIGESTIVE HEALTH FOUNDATION

CIHR IRSC
Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Supported by an unrestricted educational grant from AstraZeneca

The AstraZeneca logo is a trademark of the AstraZeneca group.

Does someone you care about suffer from a digestive disease? Wouldn't you like to help?
Join the CAG, the CDHF, the CIHR and the healthcare industry in supporting research and patients with digestive diseases.

Make a donation to the CDHF today

I'd like to give:
☐ $50 ☐ $100 ☐ $200 ☐ I'd prefer to give $ _____

☐ Cheque ☐ Visa ☐ Mastercard ☐ Amex ☐ Other

Card #: _____ Expiry Date: _____

Name: _____
Address: _____
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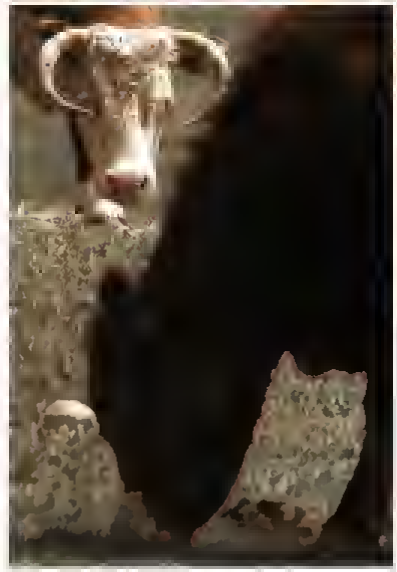
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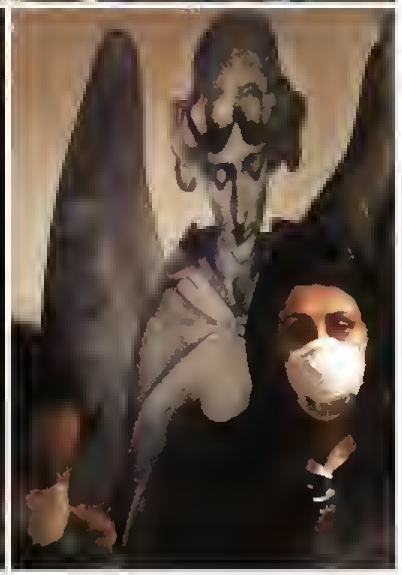
LIGHTS OUT

Some 50 million Canadians and Americans ended up without power during the Aug. 14 blackout that darkened the Toronto skyline (left). It started in Ohio, but thanks to the integration of the energy grid, cascaded from there.



MAD COW

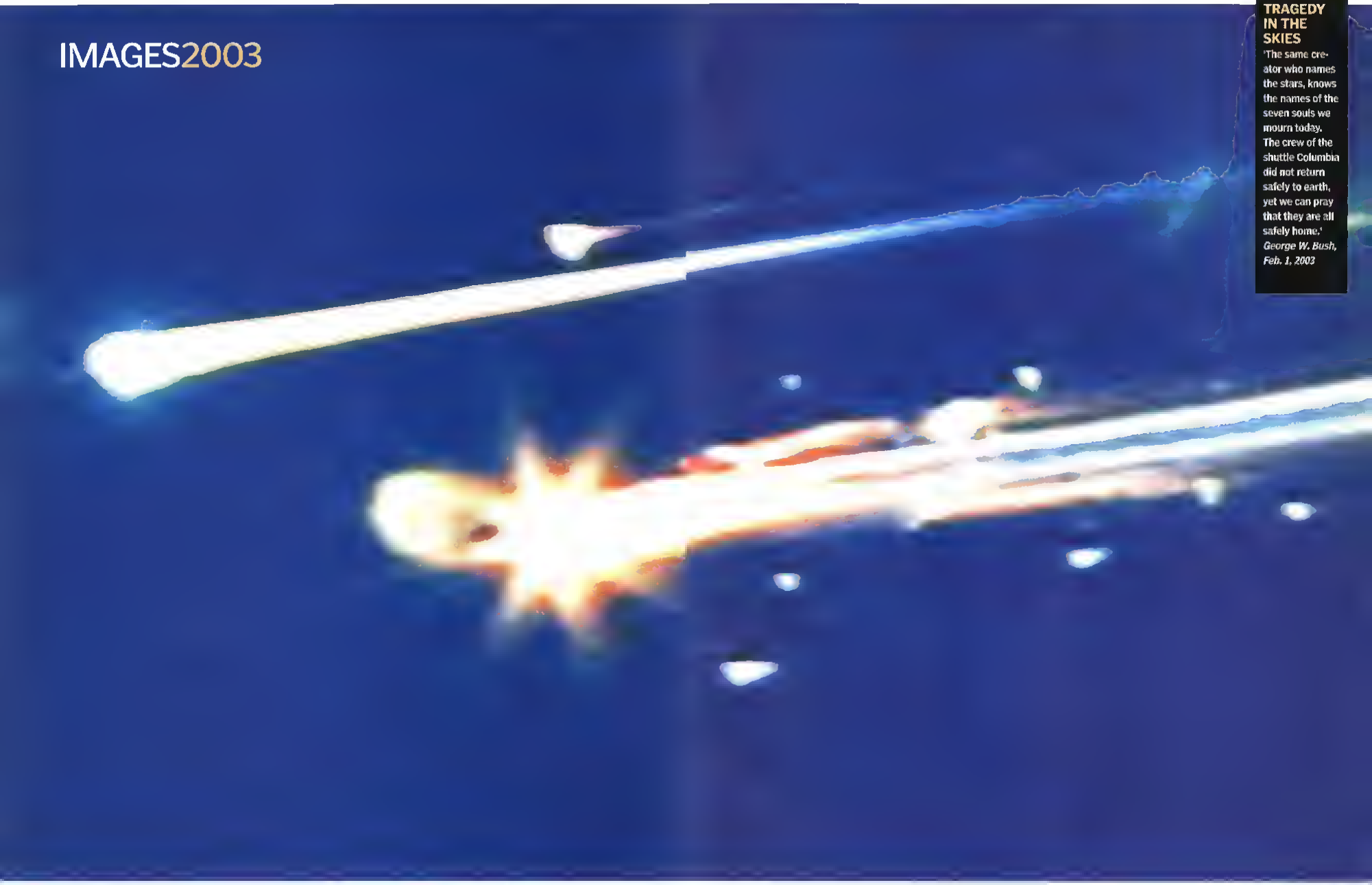
Alberta cattle may have been oblivious to the furor (bottom left), but the Canadian beef industry took a $3.3-billion hit after just one animal was found infected with the disease—for which there's no cure or treatment.



SARS ATTACK

The outbreak killed 774, including 44 in Canada. Toronto was the hardest hit (bottom right). On Dec. 17, Taiwan announced a new case, sparking fears of a resurgence of the killer virus.

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: ANDREW VAUGHAN/CP; ANDREW WALLACE/REUTERS; KEVIN FRAYER/CP; ADRIAN WYLD/CP



TRAGEDY IN THE SKIES

'The same creator who names the stars, knows the names of the seven souls we mourn today. The crew of the shuttle Columbia did not return safely to earth, yet we can pray that they are all safely home.' *George W. Bush, Feb. 1, 2003*

CP; SCOTT LIEBERMAN/TYLER MORNING TELEGRAPH/AP

IMAGES2003





GAY MARRIAGE

Provincial court rulings opened the door to legalizing same-sex marriage, and the Supreme Court is examining the issue at Ottawa's behest. As a result, at least 2,000 gay couples have taken their vows. Among them were Michael Stark (top, left) and Michael Leshner of Toronto, who had been together 22 years and had fought their case all the way to the Ontario Court of Appeal.

GLORY DAYS

What was the bigger draw: the first-ever NHL game played outdoors or Wayne Gretzky in an Oilers uniform for the first time since 1988? Whatever the reason, on Nov. 22 the stands at Edmonton's Commonwealth Stadium were full. Kristian Tait, wearing the famous No. 99, was among the record crowd of 57,167 fans.

FRAN GUNN/CP (TOP), TOM HANSON/CP



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FAREWELL2003

1. **Bob Hope** 100, well-travelled comedian
2. **Katharine Hepburn** 96, won a record four Academy Awards in a 52-year career
3. **Hume Cronyn** 91, known for both screen and stage work (including Stratford), often performing with his wife, the late Jessica Tandy.
4. **Gregory Peck**, 87, legendary Hollywood sfar of more than 50 films
5. **Johnny Cash** 71, country singer-songwriter with nearly 50 hit singles
6. **Carol Shields**, 68, Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist who told extraordinary stories of ordinary people.
7. **Rosemary Brown** 72, Vancouver-based social-justice crusader.
8. **Izzy Asper**, 71, risktaking founder of CanWest Global Communications
9. **Zahra Kazemi**, 54, Montreal photojournalist beaten to death in a Tehran prison
10. **David Brinkley** 82, broadcaster with NBC and ABC, who helped define TV news.
11. **Maurice Gibb**, 53, one-third of Australia's Bee Gees, whose music scored the disco era.
12. **David Kelly**, 59, British weapons expert who committed suicide in the midst of a British political scandal
13. **Antonio Barichievich**, 77, eccentric Montreal strongman
14. **Leni Riefenstahl** 101, Nazi filmmaker.
15. **Idi Amin**, former Ugandan dictator.

ALSO

Henry Botterell 106, Canada's last surviving First World War fighter pilot.

Bill McNeil, 78, CBC broadcasfer best known for *Voice of the Pioneer*.

Charlie Biddle, 76, U.S.-born jazz bassist who called Montreal home

Dennis McDermott, 80, former president of the Canadian Labour Congress

Ron Ziegler 63, Richard Nixon's press secretary, who some believe to have been Watergate's Deep Throat.

Fred Rogers, 74, star of *Mister Rogers' Neighborhood*.

Daniel Patrick Moynihan, 76, iconoclast, academic and Washington insider.

Cecile de Brunhoff, 99, creator of kidlit's Babar.

Nina Simone 70, eclectic stylist sang everything from jazz to pop to soul

Dr. Robert Atkins 72, popularizer of controversial, self named diet.

Layne Staley 34, vocalist for Seattle grunge band Alice in Chains

Johnny Miles, 97, Cape Breton-born runner who shattered long-distance records.

Pierre Bourgault, 69, hardline Quebec separatist.

Strom Thurmond, 100, longest-serving U.S. senator and one-time defender of racial segregation.

Lord Hartley William Shawcross, 101, chief prosecutor at the Nuremburg Trials.

Roger Neilson 69, head coach of eight NHL teams

Buddy Ebsen 95, struck black gold as Jed Clampett on TV's *The Beverly Hillbilies*.

Anna Lindh 46, assassinated Swedish foreign minister.

Edward Teller, 95, co-invenfor of the hydrogen bomb

John Ritter, 54, comedic actor, most recently on *8 Simple Rules for Dating My Teenaged Daughter*.

Robert Palmer, 54, stylish British rocker

Dan Snyder 25, Elmira, Ont.-born centre of the Atlanta Thrashers, in a high speed car accidenf caused by his teammate Dany Heatley

Willie Shoemaker, 72, record-breaking Texas-born jockey

Elliot Smith 34, brooding American singer-songwriter.

Art Carney 85, actor best known as Jackie Gleason's foil Ed Norton on TV's *The Honeymooners*.

Robert McMichael, 82, premier Canadian art collector.



(8) PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S. ALL OTHER PHOTOGRAPHS: CP









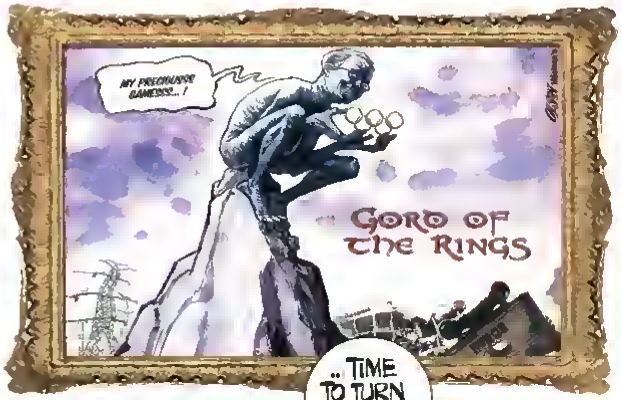




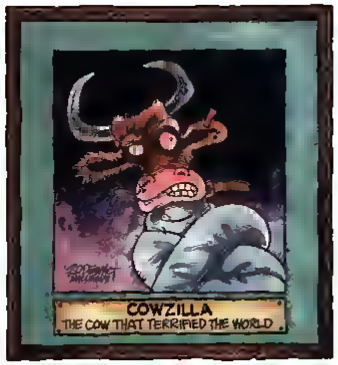














THE CAST AND PLAYERS

Michael De Adder on Hurricane Juan
Serge Chapleau on Jean Charest
Tim Dolighan on Dalton McGuinty
Graeme MacKay on Santa Martin
Susan Dewar on SARS and Toronto
Greg Perry on Jean Chrétien (top right)
Vance Rodewalt on mad cow disease
Patrick LaMontagne on the united right
Geoff Olson on Gordon Campbell
Dan Murphy on same-sex marriage and dope
Pascal Élie on Chrétien (left)
Aislin on Paul Martin

Embedded in 2003

There was material aplenty for *Maclean's* political cartoonists, who have their own, umm, *unique* views on things



WHY 2004 MAY SET RECORDS

The global economy is poised for unprecedented wealth creation

STOCK MARKET bears are hibernating. It could be a long snooze. What makes their retreat significant is that some of 2003's biggest stories were, for bears, the equivalent of extraordinarily splendid salmon runs accompanied by bumper blueberry crops. Oil and gas prices stayed high, despite the best efforts of Wall Street's Shills & Mountebanks to talk them down. War finally came to Iraq, followed by eight months of terrorism, while U.S. troops searched for Saddam Hussein—with success coming only as the year wound down. SARS, a Michael Crichtonesque plague, came out of nowhere to inflict brief recessions on Singapore, Hong Kong, and Ontario's travel industry. Deflation fears spread from China and Japan to the boardroom of the U.S. Federal Reserve. Financial scandals metastasized from their previous hosts, Wall Street brokerages and Silicon Valley, to the many regions where U.S. mutual funds were managed and marketed. The American dollar, the world's basic store of value, plunged against most of the world's currencies.

Yet global stock markets had a fine year, responding to increasing evidence of growing economic activity across the world. For the first time in modern history, an economic recovery was being led, not by the United States, but by China and East Asia. Not that the U.S. didn't do its part to wrest the world from the global recession induced by the Triple Waterfall technology collapse. The high-adrenalin injections into a sickly economy in the form of tax cuts, increased government spending, particularly by the Pentagon, and unbelievably low interest rates, worked in textbook fashion. By the third quarter, the U.S. economy was growing at its fastest rate since the Reagan recovery.

So what comes in 2004?

Answer: quite possibly the most widely spread increment in human wealth in the history of the human race. Hundreds of millions of people in Asia should make significant gains in their personal drives to emerge from the poverty that had always been their lot, to middle-class incomes. Anyone who really cares about the people of the world—as opposed to increasing the incomes and influence of local vested interests—should rejoice. Capitalism is being given its first real chance to prove in China and India that the dead hand of statism that kept billions in poverty can be replaced with the vitality of individual decision-making and risk taking in search of personal reward. As the *National Review*'s John O'Sullivan wryly observes, "The Chinese are Communists the way the French are Catholics."

Future historians will write that this was the decade when more people acquired indoor plumbing and cars than in any decade since the appearance of those great, liberating inventions—the flush toilet and the internal combustion engine. They will also write that these memorable changes in human personal behaviour created the greatest demand for commodities since the onset of the Industrial Revolution. According to London analyst Jim Lennon, China's increased consumption of commodities is creating a potential crisis for major industrial users of basic materials around the world. Among the gains in demand this year: copper, 25 per cent; stainless steel, 30 per cent; aluminum, 23 per cent; and nickel, 50 per cent. Investors revelling in the stock market performance of such companies as Inco, Alcan, Freeport McMoRan, Phelps Dodge and BHP Billiton know whom to thank for draining world raw material inventories.

WHEN people in China's coastal cities have the same percentage automobile ownership as South Koreans, the world will need the oil of two new Saudi Arabias

But the best is yet to come for investors—and the worst for Western industrial consumers. China's new car sales are up by more than half this year, and China is set to be the world's second most important car market within a decade. China's oil imports account for 30 per cent of this year's global increase in demand. The word in Houston is that when the residents of China's coastal cities have the same percentage automobile ownership as today's South Koreans, the world will need the oil output of two new Saudi Arabias. China is also primarily responsible for sending cotton prices to their highest levels in eight years.

Most economists ascribe the run-up in metals prices to the jump in U.S. economic activity. They are wrong. When Americans get more wealth, they spend it largely on health care, philanthropy, tort lawyers, travel and pornography. (About a quarter of Internet usage is pornography related; sex has displaced football and baseball as America's favourite spectator sport.) Still, none of these five categories creates demand for commodities, increased incomes and credit for hundreds of millions of Asians do.

Expect continued excellent stock market performance for shares of resource companies in 2004. Gold prices will continue to go up as much as the U.S. dollar goes down. Strong commodity prices, a weak greenback, a strengthening global economy and continuation of the War on Terror mean rising interest rates worldwide next year, but not high enough to kill the bull markets in commodity and dividend paying stocks. (Technology stocks have bounced from their lows, but they are once again grossly overvalued. Shop elsewhere.)

Unless the falling greenback causes a financial crisis *à la* 1987, 2004 should be a fine year for Canadian investors.

Bet on it.

Donald Coxe is chairman of Harris Investment Management in Chicago and of Toronto-based Jones Heward Investments. dcoxe@macleans.ca



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MR. CENTRE-LEFT

Despite his crackdown on spending, the PM sees himself as a liberal's Liberal

WHEN PAUL MARTIN sat down with *Maclean's* Editor **Anthony Wilson-Smith** and Ottawa Bureau Chief **John Geddes** five days after his Dec. 12 swearing-in ceremony as prime minister, he appeared confident of achieving the set of goals he has set for himself—and equally sure he will enjoy doing so. During his first print interview since taking office, Canada's 21st prime minister spoke candidly about his feelings and goals. Excerpts:

Have you noticed any change in the way people treat you since you got this job?
My staff comes in and their first words are, "Hello, Paul." Then they correct themselves and say, "Prime Minister." Then they can't figure out which, and the third thing they say is usually unprintable.

How much did you think about your late father on the day of your swearing in?
When I was asked that question at a press conference and had difficulty answering, I was very surprised. My dad's been dead for 10 years. It's not the first time I've talked about him, and I've never had that problem. So it was clear that he was much more prominent in my mind than I actually realized.

You've taken on direct responsibility for issues such as cities, Aboriginal affairs, U.S. relations. So how will you keep the big picture in mind?
It is not difficult to keep multiple balls in the air. Nor to make rapid-fire decisions. I'm surrounded by very good people. That's the first thing. The second thing is, you come into this with very strong convictions and a context, this is how I see the world, this is how I see the country, this is how I see the priorities, and this is what I want to do, short, medium and long term. The decisions flow almost automatically. The difficult part is the communications. In public life, you've got to bring people with you.

How do you square the major role you have taken on personally with your pledge to give ordinary MPs more to do?
There are a wide range of issues that go through a multitude of departments. Ultimately, the only way those cross-cutting issues get taken care of is if the prime minister steps right in. It is important that the public service and government see that the prime minister says, "This has to be taken care of." Parliament has to play an important role. If you're constantly making issues on a reactive basis, then it's easy for government to make the decision. But if you're trying to get ahead of the curve, then you need the debate to take place. My belief—and this is the gamble that parliamentary reform is all about—is that MPs, including the opposition, will be responsible when they're asked to be responsible.

How do you expect MPs to adjust to a more freewheeling House?
Parliamentarians understand this. Journalists, in this town, may have some difficulty. The first time that a huge debate breaks out, and the media says, "Oh my God, the government is losing control," let me tell you, that's when the government will be in control, because that's what we want to have happen.

You've been portrayed by NDP Leader Jack Layton as a rich man out of touch with the concerns of Canadians less well off.
Jack Layton's problem is that he can't deal with policies, so he has to deal with personal attacks. If you look at the great days of the New Democratic Party—Tommy Douglas, David Lewis—you were dealing with people who had a strong set of convictions and they expressed those convictions.

My father was a politician, he had no money, he came from a very poor family. My mother's family were farming people. I was lucky in life, but I made that, I didn't inherit it. My riding is a microcosm of Canada. Those people elected me in every election since 1988, and they elected me because they know I am one of them.

Is your biggest opposition from the right or the left?
I regard myself as a centre-left Liberal. Not everybody would necessarily share that view, but that's how I regard myself. Therefore, I'm more sensitive, I think, to arguments from the left. I don't think they are being very well put by the NDP right now. And there are no arguments these days coming from the right.

What kind of hours are you working now?
I probably start about 7:30 in the morning. I usually get up about an hour earlier than that, and I go to bed quite late. But I've always done that.

Much different than the pace at finance?
No, not a bit.

About two months into this job, your predecessor said his biggest surprise in the job was that it wasn't as hard as he expected it to be. How do you feel?
It's been pretty well what I expected. You have to know what it is you want to do, and have that very clear in your mind. And you have to know where you are going to leave off and somebody else is going to pick up. For

PHOTOGRAPHS BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

example, as prime minister, I have no intention of being finance minister. I intend to support the finance minister.

You've moved quickly to freeze the size of the public service and review all spending. Do you foresee any circumstance in which your government would eventually have to run a deficit?
Obviously, if we found ourselves in a deep depression. I'm not an ideologue. Essentially, though, the confidence in the country that has resulted from having defeated



the deficit is one of the reasons why we've created more jobs than any major country. It's one of the reasons why, despite SARS, despite everything else, there is huge confidence in the Canadian economy. The feeling in the nation that we're not going back into deficit is incredibly important.

You have a very good relationship with Jean Charest of Quebec. Is there any possibility of reopening constitutional talks?
No.

You're a practising member of the Roman Catholic Church. How much will your personal beliefs impact whatever outcome we'll see on the gay marriage issue?
I have a value system that is certainly influenced by my religion, but I will approach this as a legislator. I certainly believe in the separation of church and state.

Our *Maclean's* year-end poll shows that Canadians are not very worried about Canada-U.S. relations. How important to you is warming up relations with Washington?
When I think of softwood lumber, when I think of mad cow disease, I believe that having a strong relationship with the United States is important. But we are an independent country. The Canadian prime minister speaks for Canada's interests, first and only. I don't think you buy friendship by giving in. The degree to which we are seen dealing with problems beyond North America will go a long way to making sure the Americans respect us and know exactly where we're coming from.

You have promised that judges being considered for appointment to the Supreme Court of Canada will first be publicly reviewed. Some judges don't like that.
As far as the Supreme Court is concerned, there has to be a review. Now, whether Parliament should conduct reviews itself, that's an issue. Parliament could delegate this to another panel. I intend to seek advice. We're not going do this in a way that potential nominees are subjected to the political viciousness we see in the United States.

Has there been a personal celebratory moment since you were sworn in as prime minister?
I have a tendency when I'm thinking about something to lean back and put my feet on my desk. One day on the weekend after I was sworn in, I went into the prime minister's office on Parliament Hill, and sat back and without thinking I put my feet up on my desk. All of a sudden, I thought, "this is the moment." But before I had 30 seconds to savour it, the phone rang. I had to pick it up and it was the latest crisis to be resolved and the bubble burst.

There's been criticism of the way you handled naming your cabinet, that you didn't inform some ministers they were losing their jobs.
I phoned every single person. And I told every single person that it was going to be tough. Maybe I wasn't explicit in some calls, but I did it a week to 10 days earlier. If the message didn't come through as clearly as it should have, I accept full responsibility.

You're described as technology-phobic. Are you using a Blackberry yet?
Yes, I do use a Blackberry. The difference between me and people around me is I use the Blackberry when I'm alone. They use the Blackberry instead of talking to people.

Has Mrs. Martin decided what she would like to do as wife of the prime minister?
She's been active all her life in charities. Whether she's going to pick one in particular now, I don't know. Sheila has no intention of playing a public role. She'll be there with me. It's not going to change our family life at all. I have been lucky in terms of my family and that is 100 per cent due to her.

Do you have a legacy ambition?
I know what I'd like to have happen. We have a very high quality of life because we have one of the most open economies in the world. You can't be 30 million people and do as well as we do unless your economy is open and unless, essentially, you're taking advantage of every uptick of the global economy. So there's no doubt in my mind where we're going to be a decade from now. If a decade from now, we're leading the pack, which I think we will be, then that will be, as far as I'm concerned, a job well done.

And will you be sitting in office to celebrate that a decade from now?
Not a bad target.

To read more of our interview with Paul Martin visit *www.macleans.ca/topstories*

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S



IF LIFE WERE LIKE THAT,

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LAYING OUT THE MARTIN RULES

The new Prime Minister is wasting no time in putting his stamp on Ottawa

PAUL MARTIN waited a long time to take over—long enough that it seems he could barely wait to make Ottawa *his* town. Before heading off to his farm in Quebec's Eastern Townships for Christmas, the newly minted Prime Minister laid out a sweeping agenda for changing the way the federal government works—and laid down the law on the way it spends. It's far too early to guess how Martin will fare on what he says are his big objectives: strengthening Canada's "social foundations" in health care and education, building up a "21st century economy", and promoting the country's "pride and influence" abroad. But there's enough in what he did in his first days in office that he won't fail for lack of boldness. His vow to reform the way Supreme Court of Canada judges get their jobs shows Martin isn't shying away from controversy. His moves to set a new tone on the very files that had earned Jean Chrétien kudos for making Canada cool shows he's not afraid to break with the recent past. And his dramatic signal that no current spending is safe from the axe leaves little doubt that it's *his* agenda—not the status quo—that's going to get funded. Here, *Maclean's* takes the pulse of a capital under new management.

JUDGING THE JUDGES

Pierre Trudeau's appointment of Manitoba judge Brian Dickson to the Supreme Court of Canada in 1973 was, in hindsight, a key moment in Canadian legal history. After Trudeau's 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms revolutionized Canadian law—and politics—it was Dickson, presiding as chief justice from 1984 to 1990, who set the tone for the Charter era with a series of landmark rulings. Now, a new prime minister is proposing reforms to the way Supreme Court judges are chosen that might have stopped the legendary Dickson, who died in 1998, from agreeing to sit on the top court. Paul Martin promises to give a parliamentary committee power to review Supreme Court nominations before they are made final. Kent Roach, co-author of the new biography *Brian Dickson: A Judge's Journey*, says Dickson was staunchly opposed to the notion of MPs publicly vetting judicial appointments. "The strength of his opposition was such that he would not have allowed himself to go through such a process to be elevated to the Supreme Court," Roach, a University of Toronto law professor, told *Maclean's*.



Dickson's view is shared by many other judges, including his successor as chief justice, Antonio Lamer. When Martin first publicly stated his preference for a House committee to review the appointments, Lamer, who retired early in 2000, declared himself "dead against it." He raised the spectre of American-style partisan wrangling over who gets chosen. Many Canadian legal experts are uneasy about the U.S. Senate hearings that probe the views and character of a president's picks for the Supreme Court—especially after the pitched partisan battles that surrounded the nominations of Clarence Thomas and Robert Bork. Could that happen in Canada? Roach expects the Alliance will try and make its opposition to "judicial activism" a major policy plank of the new Conservative party. "Imagine if one of the judges on a court of appeal that ruled in favour of gay marriage came before a parliamentary committee," he said.

But Martin seems determined to make the change. His blueprint for a new approach to governing, released when he was sworn in as prime minister on Dec. 12, promised consultations on "how best to implement prior review of appointments of Supreme Court of Canada judges"—not on whether to go ahead with the reform. Roach points out that Prime Minister Tony Blair has recently embarked on an overhaul of how Britain's top judges are chosen. "This is part of a worldwide movement toward greater transparency," Roach said. "It's not just a matter of going to U.S.-style confirmation hearings." Just how close Canadagers to that controversial U.S. model remains to be seen. What's certain is that any system that puts would be Supreme Court judges in front of inquisitive MPs is bound to change forever the aloof aura that now surrounds the nine men and women who get to wear those red robes. JOHN GEDDES



PENNY-PINCHING

So much for letting the good times roll. After the government's books were balanced in 1997-98, a sense of relief spread through the federal bureaucracy. The feeling that the purse strings were loosening—after the belt-tightening, deficit-fighting days—reached an apex last February when then-finance minister John Manley announced $25 billion in new spending in the final budget of Jean Chrétien's government. Now, Manley and Chrétien are gone, and a pre-Christmas clampdown by the new regime has sent a chill through Ottawa. Last week, Paul Martin and Finance Minister Ralph Goodale froze the size of the public service, halted construction projects worth billions, and ordered a probing review of all spending.

Yet the message is mixed: the new Prime Minister also wasted no time setting out an ambitious agenda, in everything from health care to Aboriginal affairs, that's going to require lots of money to implement. Don Drummond, who was a senior official under Martin when he was finance minister and is now Toronto Dominion Bank's chief economist, says Martin's austerity measures and grand plans go together. "It's not as if we're in imminent danger of going back into deficit, but the cupboard is bare in terms of funding new initiatives," Drummond says. "So he's got to create a pool of internal savings for spending." The first priority is to hit the government's target of remaining $2.3 billion in the black for the current fiscal year, of which $2 billion is earmarked for a special payment to the provinces to help cover health-care costs.

The notion that Ottawa's fiscal margin of error is now so slim is surprising after the hefty surpluses of recent years. Drummond says the culprit is growth in federal program spending that has averaged 6.7 per cent over the past four years. He argues spending increases should have been held to less than half that pace. But Martin's critics on the left claim the real problem is intentional underestimating of the size of the surplus—and an insistence on proceeding with business tax cuts. NDP Leader Jack Layton is calling on Martin to cancel a scheduled drop in the corporate tax rate to 21 per cent from 23 per cent on Jan. 1, 2004. Keeping the higher rate would net Ottawa an extra $1.1 billion next year, according to Finance Department figures. Layton cites the example set by Liberal Premier Dalton McGuinty, who halted planned Ontario tax reductions as part of coping with the deficit he inherited on taking office. But Martin shows no sign of following McGuinty's lead. Instead, the pressure is on for federal mandarins to squeeze old programs hard enough to make room for fresh priorities by the time of the widely expected spring election. JG

COOLING OFF

The Economist is as famous for its button-down sense of humour as it is for its weekly pages of fiscal charts and graphs. But even by those elevated standards, the cover image on North American editions of the magazine's Sept. 27 issue was striking: a moose wearing cool sunglasses, with the cover line "Canada's new spirit."

"A cautious case can be made that Canada is now rather cool," *The Economist*'s editorialists opined. Their evidence: "A certain boldness in social matters," including Jean Chrétien's initiatives to "legalize

ILLUSTRATIONS BY ALAIN PILON

gay marriage and decriminalize marijuana, both excellent liberal ideas." The magazine also praised Chrétien for "better protection of the environment" and his "robust" handling of Quebec separatism, which culminated in Chrétien "ramming through the Clarity Act."

Now Chrétien has retired from government. And his "rather cool" legacy? Almost every element of it faces challenge or delay from the new Paul Martin government.

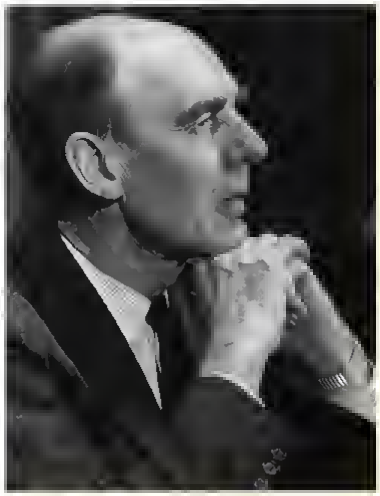
Better protection of the environment? Martin has been a champion at sending mixed signals regarding the Kyoto accord, which demands that signatory countries cut their emission of gases that tend to heat the atmosphere. He has been quicker to insist on a "plan" for implementing Kyoto than to get to work producing one, many in Alberta's oil patch take his comments as evidence of weak resolve.

Social boldness? The justice minister who led the charge on gay marriage and pot legalization, Martin Cauchon, is out. His replacement, Irwin Cotler, has impeccable credentials as a human-rights lawyer. But Cotler said he wants to "broaden" a Supreme Court reference on gay marriage to ask whether civil unions, short of marriage, would be acceptable. "This is of great concern because it could delay and even derail" same sex marriage legislation, says Gilles Marchildon of the gay rights group Egale Canada.

And so much for "robust" federalism: Stéphane Dion, author of the Clarity Act, was dumped from cabinet and replaced by Pierre Pettigrew, who has never liked confrontation with Quebec nationalists and who announced he wants to treat the provinces as "partners, not problems."

The Economist offered Chrétien no praise for staying out of the Iraq war, but Liberals gathered in November for the party's leadership convention cheered Chrétien for that decision. Martin has said he would have done the same thing—but his new defence minister, David Pratt, was one of the few Liberals who thought Canada should join the war.

Most of the decisions *The Economist* praises were taken while Martin was out of government. Now that he's back in, he's showing lukewarm enthusiasm for the whole package. And as Martin's rock star friend Bono could tell him, lukewarm enthusiasm isn't cool. PAUL WELLS



PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/CP

'THE BEST PM WE NEVER HAD'

All things seemed possible when Robert Stanfield won the nation's first made-for-TV leadership convention in 1967. His victory—orchestrated by backroom strategist Dalton Camp—laid the foundation for the modern Progressive Conservatives. But the closest he came to becoming prime minister was when the PCs fell two seats shy of defeating Pierre Trudeau in 1972.

Many Canadians remember a Canadian Press photo showing Stanfield dropping a football during a break with reporters in the 1974 federal election campaign. In fact, he caught more tosses than he dropped that day, but the image seared his prospects.

His many admirers insist Stanfield was "the best prime minister we never had." And when he died last week in Ottawa at 89, he was eulogized for his decency in public life, his commitment to Quebec's role in Confederation and a Burkean view of social policies that defies the prevailing neo-conservatism. "Increasing the size of the GNP is important," he told *Maclean's* in a 1976 interview, "but it is not in itself a sufficient goal for a civilized society."

His top priority was Canadian unity and appealing to Quebecers to participate in the national enterprise. After losing the 1968 election to Trudeau, Stanfield vacationed in Quebec for French-immersion sessions and strongly defended the Liberals' Official Languages Act. "This bill," he told the Commons, "is placed before the House to strengthen rather than weaken Canadian unity." To his chagrin, 17 of his 72-member caucus, including former leader John Diefenbaker, voted against the measure. Stanfield eventually stepped down as party leader in 1976 and became an elder statesman.

Stanfield, who was not averse to a belt of good rum or a tall tale, was effective in small groups and at private occasions. He was better company than Trudeau and even seemed to enjoy journalists. He would take us to lunch at Ottawa's Rideau Club, in part, we suspected, because this otherwise frugal man had a mandatory quarterly minimum to work off, but he was always gracious and convincing. And at the off-the-record annual national press gallery dinner, Stanfield invariably stole the show with a speech that brimmed with barbs and self-deprecation.

He was born into politics and privilege. His family's wealth was based on the Truro family knitting and underwear business. His father was a member of the provincial legislature and later lieutenant governor. After graduating from Halifax's Dalhousie University in economics and political science with highest honours, he got his law degree at Harvard. Bored by the law, he went into provincial politics and served as Nova Scotia premier for 11 years.

His wife, Joyce, mother of his four children, died in a car accident in 1954. Three years later, he married Mary Hall, who died of cancer in 1977. In 1978, Stanfield wed Anne Austin and they lived quietly in Ottawa's exclusive Rockcliffe Park. In retirement, he continued his interest in public policy and was often called upon by government officials for advice. Stanfield, wrote legendary *Vancouver Sun* editor Bruce Hutchison, "had the qualities of an excellent prime minister—above all, the human, healing qualities." And to those of us who knew him, he was, in the words of his 1967 campaign slogan "the man with the winning way." ROBERT LEWIS

Robert Lewis, vice-president, content development, Rogers Media Inc., was editor of *Maclean's* from 1993 to 2000.

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THE RUSSIANS ARE COMING

This new wave of wealthy visitors to England is likely to remain

THE STREETS of London are packed with shoppers, property prices are at an all-time high and balalaika music is interspersed with jingle bells. The Russian community in London now numbers some 200,000 and is growing. The first wave, which came after the collapse of the Soviet empire, was the now familiar stereotype: Versace-clad women, all fringed leather and sequins, their blond hair brittle from double-process colour, seeking even more outrageous Roberto Cavalli outfits. The men beside them, with briefcases of cash and brief civility, creating havoc in Bond Street jewellery shops. Next came the fabulously wealthy oligarchs like President Vladimir Putin's ex-best friend, Boris Berezovsky, just granted political asylum in Britain in September and with a London residence reputed to have in excess of 50 security men.

Now it is the turn of the clever young ones—often single and under 40, buying homes in London as the correct accessory to success, rather like an Englishman buying in Tuscany. These Russians are different again, more like the Greek shipping families who came to London in 1981 when the socialist Andreas Papandreou came to power in Greece.

Today, a Soviet past is no handicap. Western capitals from Monte Carlo to London have seen money come—and watched it disappear. The Middle East oil potentates were everywhere in the eighties, until one day all those chadors, robes and sunglasses simply vanished. Next came the Japanese—until their economy tanked. Each wave brings the inevitable change: new salesgirls in all the swanky boutiques who speak the monied language of the moment.

Charting Russian taste is not hard. London real estate agent Rebecca Reade sums up nationalities her way: "Americans are bathrooms, cupboards and kitchens. The Japanese are garage, doorman and length of lease. Russians want state-of-the-art design with plasma screens in every room, thumbprint switch cards instead of door keys, glass and chrome. They want overt cutting-edge luxury—the goods in the window."

Cutting edge. Wealthy Russians could care less about the expensive furniture of their homeland on the covers of Sotheby's and Christie's catalogues. A beautiful and rare little steel Tula table went for US$1 million last year—to New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Russians don't buy the exquisite Faberge pieces and, says Russian furniture expert, Antoine Cheneviere, "if they go for old, it has to be gold, 19th-century gilded pieces."

One is puzzled by the Russian indifference to their heritage. Perhaps they are just tired of looking backwards—to them, the antique is simply "old." "Strangely," says jeweller Theo Fennell, who creates commissioned one-of-a-kind *objets* in precious metals and gems, "the wealthy Russians have a minimalist side. Their culture and background screams baroque and ornate, but I think their financial pre-eminence makes them want to be the first in everything. They're not going to be the first in baroque stuff, but they can be the first in technological innovations."

WEALTHY Russians could care less about the expensive furniture of their homeland. Perhaps they are tired of looking backwards: to them antique is simply 'old.'

These Russians may well be here to stay, unlike other waves of the newly rich who have simply passed through. England suits them. Its tax laws are agreeable and Eton and Harrow sit well as future schools for their children.

In the 19th century, the Russians were francophiles, but then so was the whole world. France was the leader in culinary arts. French was the language of diplomacy. Cultivated people looked to France for music and art. By the turn of the century, English might have replaced French in Russian affections, but the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution came and there was a 70-year cultural hiatus ending only in 1991 when the Soviet empire collapsed. By then, America was the leading edge and today, if the Russian elites have a second language, it is English. As it happens, Russians are innately good linguists and many pick up second or third languages with ease. Indeed, one of the reasons Soviet diplomacy always had an advantage over U.S. diplomacy during the Cold War years was the greater linguistic capability of the Russians. Highly placed Americans were rarely able to communicate directly with their adversaries and even some allies in their own language.

The Russians are a great and serious nationality. Perhaps when the buying and accumulation of objects have lost their initial allure, when the excitement of restaurants and parties has dwindled or been subsumed by other pursuits, when just a little more of England is in their blood, their superior linguistic ability will fuse with something else. One of the 20th century's most powerful novelists in the English language was Vladimir Nabokov, a Russian émigré exiled to Berlin who also lived in Paris, the U.S. and Switzerland. And one of his most powerful and deeply moving novels is *Pnin*, a depiction of the elderly, uprooted professor Timofey Pnin, stumbling through his transition from Leninized Russia to Waindell College in the New World. Somewhere, one hopes, in all the bright energetic faces of London's new Russians or in their children to come, is another master of English prose, waiting to depict with stunning insight how his or her parents came to the land of Anglo Saxons and just what happened next. M

Barbara Amiel's column appears monthly.
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A STUDY IN KINDNESS

Edith Petes donated half her liver to a co-worker with a rare blood type like hers. Wouldn't anyone?

AS EDITH tells it, a lifetime of trying to do the right thing brought her to this moment. And when the last test result came in and she felt that shiver of excitement, like the difference between planning a long trip and actually having the ticket in your hand, she knew she had made the right decision. "If I had been truly scared I would have backed out then," she says. "But I was just so happy. I could hardly wait."

With that, Edith Petes, a modest, unassuming woman of 47, became one of a small band of people around the world to help extend the bounds of modern medicine. She had agreed to donate slightly more than half her liver to a co-worker in need of a transplant. To very nearly a perfect stranger.

A living donation, it is called, as distinct from the "cadaveric" organs harvested from the dead. Kidneys were the first gift of this type: humans have two and can get by with just one. Now livers, cut in half and regenerated inside the donor; and soon perhaps, on a regular basis, lungs. "We're thinking about that," says Dr. Gary Levy, head of the multi-organ transplant program at Toronto General Hospital, one of the largest and most innovative transplanters on the continent. "We'd probably do it with two segments, from different donors."

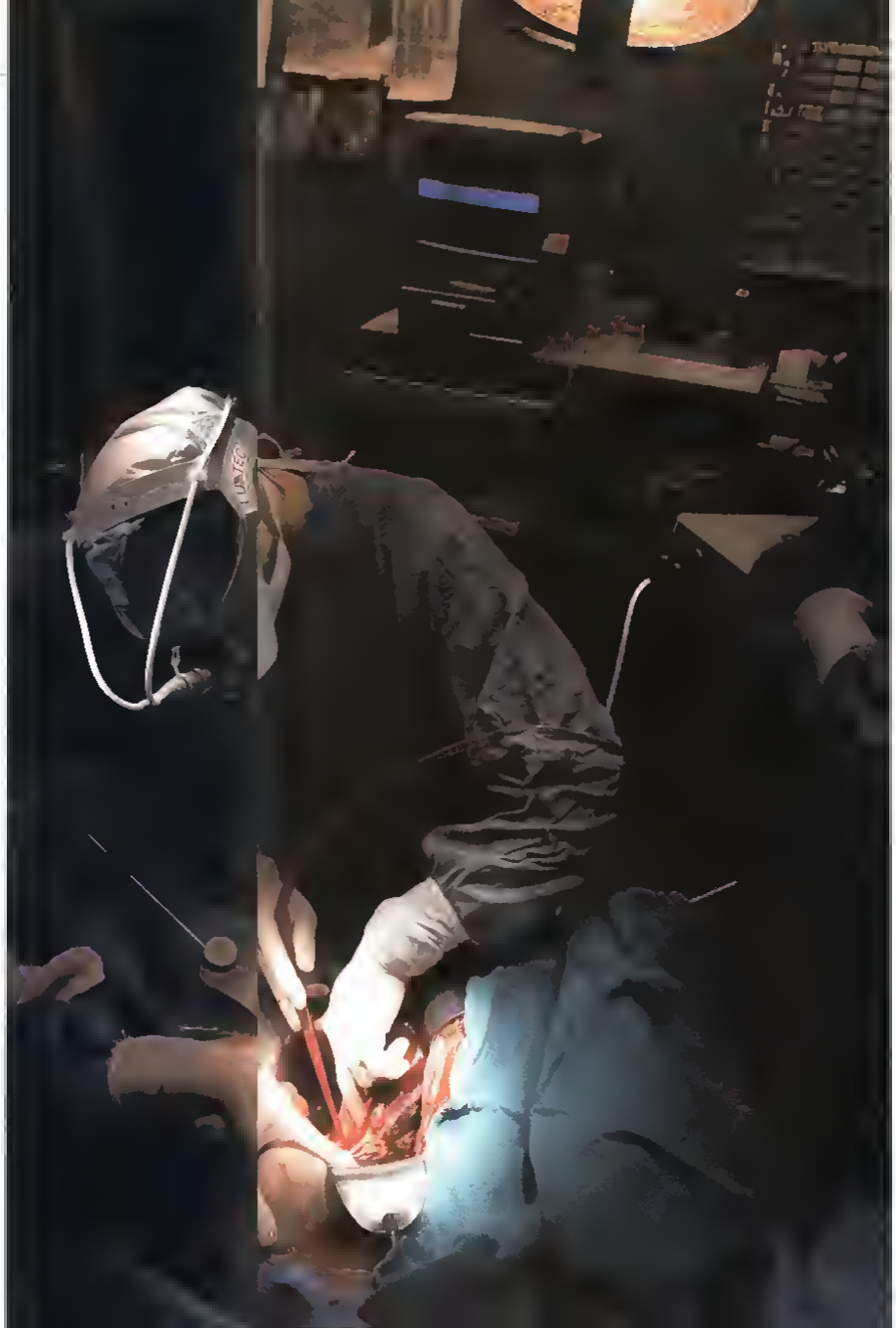
Doctors view living donation as the way of the future, a neat sidestep around the constantly ballooning waiting lists of sick and fretful recipients. And, let's face it, around the fact that we Canadians are among the world's more apathetic organ donors. But this solution is not without its unique hurdles.

Edith, who lives on her own, agonized for weeks over the financial implications of taking so much time off work—up to three months—and whether she had the mental toughness to go through major surgery on behalf of someone else. In this instance, Zahir Ismail, someone she liked but really knew only to kibitz with around the office. There were compelling factors: he had a rare blood type, like hers, and he was wasting away at home with a liver-destroying illness, hepatitis C, because no match could be found.

Putting a toe in the water, Edith underwent the initial barrage of tests—blood work, ultrasounds, eventually an MRI—at each stage being told she could back out at any time. One by one, she met the transplant team: the coordinator, the social worker, the surgeons and the psychiatrist. "He wanted to know if I was in love with Zahir. Or if Zahir was in love with me." Edith nearly hoots at the idea. She has a great laugh, guileless and ironic at the same time.

The psychiatrist probed, gently but insistently. Might she be doing this for money, or for status? Or perhaps to hurt herself because she had been unable to bear children successfully? Why would an otherwise healthy woman, in the prime of her life, agree to donate one of her organs to someone she had known only a short period?

It's a very good question.



Grant operates on Petes in the first stage of the transplant process

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER GREIG/MACLEAN'S

TRANSPLANT MEDICINE has long been a pioneering force—and not always a gentle one—for next-generation drugs and surgical technique. It's opened a huge window on immune diseases, cancer treatment and gene therapy. It's also been a testing ground for society's compassion.

When it comes to organ donation, Canada's rate has been stuck at 14 donors per million population for at least a decade. Levels are slightly higher on the Prairies and in Quebec, but overall Canada lags well behind the United States and most of Europe, particularly Spain where the rate of donation is more than twice ours. There is also the biological fact that the body decays so quickly with death, it's almost impossible to extract a suitable organ from someone who expires at home or even in an ambulance. That's where living donation has its advantage. In this case it also brought together two extraordinary lives.

"This is a very Canadian story," Zahir said the first time we met. By this he meant an immigrant story. A wiry 51 year old Muslim with an infectious grin and big, expressive eyes, Ismail left his native Kenya as a teenager to study in the U.S. and Denmark, before coming to Canada in 1984 to earn a Ph.D. in regional planning and find the woman of his dreams, a fellow student at Ontario's University of Waterloo.

Petes was a nurse in her native Hungary,

a quiet, altruistic woman who left the dead end of Communism with her husband for a new life in Sweden. They came to Toronto in 1991, sponsored by a Hungarian church, but their marriage did not survive the transitions. Petes taught herself English and a new trade, as a legal assistant, and found new friends. Bringing her together with Zahir was very Canadian, yes. It was also a match made in the kindness of the human heart.

"I don't know if I would have done this if he didn't have a child," Edith said later. "Maybe. I don't know. That was a very important factor. Of course his life in itself was worth the risk. And maybe because I lost my children it started me thinking that I couldn't give life, but maybe I could give a father to a child somehow." She laughs again. "It just sounds so sappy." But with Zahir, "I just had this feeling that I was at the right place at the right time. How many times do you get the chance to save somebody's life?"

ORGAN TRANSPLANTATION developed in earnest in the 1950s and '60s. Kidneys came first, then heart and liver; lungs much later—that was Canada's gift to the world in 1983. Most Canadians of a certain age can remember when South Africa's Dr. Christiaan Barnard performed the world's first successful heart transplant in 1968. It was like a door had opened on something both magical and heretical at the same time. Lost in the initial euphoria, only two of the first 100 recipients lived beyond six months.

The early history of liver transplants was nearly as bad, almost grotesque. Organ rejection was not really overcome until the mid-1980s, when powerful immune system suppressants were developed. By then, of course, there were new frontiers to cross.

Japan has led the way with living donors, largely because societal beliefs there discouraged cutting up the dead. Scientists had known for some time that the liver has an amazing ability to regenerate itself, and early cases involved transplanting the small left lobe of an adult liver to a sick child. In 1994, Japanese surgeons pioneered the technique with adults, removing the larger right lobe—up to 70 per cent of the total liver—and grafting it onto someone with an incurable liver disease. That was the gift Edith was giving Zahir.

Living-donor transplants of livers began in earnest in Europe and North America about five years ago. They have not been without problems: seven donors have died in the U.S. and a handful have required subsequent transplants of their own because their liver did not regenerate the way it was supposed to. TGH tells potential donors that globally there's a one per cent risk of death from the operation—not unlike that for routine cardiac surgery. The difference, of course, is that this is a risk a healthy donor does not *have* to run.

Toronto General's living donor program started four years ago when it lured home Toronto native Dr. David Grant, 49, a pioneer of what are called complex cluster transplants—several organs at the same time. The hospital's record has been exceptional: no donor deaths, and of the 88 living-donor liver procedures done at TGH and in the linked program next door at the Hospital for Sick Children between June 1996 and last month, 60 of 71 adult recipients are still living, as are 16 of the 17 pediatric patients. The survival rate for 2002 was 95 per cent, well above the U.S. average of 77 per cent. It's a record that speaks to both high standards *and* extreme caution.

"Success is our Achilles heel," says Levy, the transplant program director at TGH. "We have people coming here in their mid-80s looking for a transplant. I'm not sure it's something I'd want to do at that age but I can understand their rationale." TGH houses Canada's largest transplant team, performing nearly 300 a year. Lungs and livers



DONOR: EDITH PETES, 47 **RECIPIENT: ZAHIR ISMAIL, 51**

A nurse from Hungary who settled in Canada in 1991 and lives on her own, she agonized for weeks over the implications of taking such a serious step to help someone she barely knew at her workplace, Ontario's Ministry of Health. ON DECIDING TO GO AHEAD: "I just had this feeling that I was at the right place at the right time. How many times do you get the chance to save somebody's life?"

Kenyan-born, in Canada since 1984, Zahir was a married father of one daughter working as a health-system planner for the Ontario government. By 2000, his liver was seriously impaired as a result of hepatitis C he likely contracted as a child. SAYS HIS WIFE, ALISON DANTAS: "What Edith did was a completely selfless act. It was about caring and having a sense of responsibility for other people."

Donor and recipient share a relaxed moment at his home a week before the surgery

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

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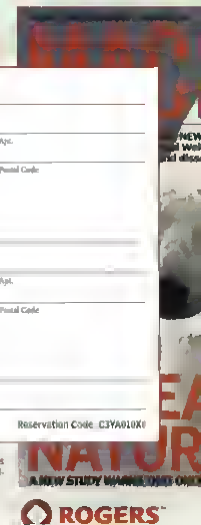
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ROGERS



Edith takes a moment to wish Zahir well shortly before their operations begin



The surgical team finishes its work on Petes and readies her organ for transplant

are specialties, both programs among the largest in the world. By the time Zahir Ismail was deemed sick enough to go on the province's waiting list, it was approaching 320 names. The wait could be four years. On average, 36 liver patients will die before their number is called.

ZAHIR WAS TOLD he probably contracted hep C when he was a child in Mombassa, likely through a well-intentioned but unsafe vaccination. He had his first attack around 1986. But he quickly bounced back and married. Life was good. With two professional incomes—he as a health-system planner, his wife, Alison Dantas, as executive director of the Association of Ontario Midwives—they had a daughter and bought a house in one of those downtown Toronto neighbourhoods where kids play all day on the street. His health didn't really deteriorate until early 2000 when he had massive internal bleeding. That began the Catch 22 that is hep C: at that point he was too sick for conventional treatment like interferon (his blood platelet count was too low), but not sick enough for a transplant.

His doctor at first estimated it would be 10 to 12 years before he'd be an eligible candidate for the surgery. But just 2½ years after that diagnosis he'd deteriorated so much he was put on the list in July 2002. During that year he was hospitalized eight times, often for more than a week at a stretch.

A sister applied to be a donor but didn't meet the TGH criteria. So did his wife, even with a young child at home. Alison went all the way to the final test before it was determined her liver was a bit too small, which took the risk of death just beyond the one-per-cent range. "It was a devastating moment," she said later.

At work, word spread. Edith contacted Zahir and he advised her to call the hospital, but then they stopped talking. "I did not want to influence her," Zahir said. "I didn't want to get his hopes up," said Edith. When Edith passed her final test, an MRI designed to see if there were any structural anomalies on her liver, she was called the next day and given a choice. Do you want to do this a week from now? Or two?

FOR THOSE INVOLVED, Edith and Zahir looked to be the poster couple for the brave new age of living donor transplantation. No one had seriously thought this might not work out. But this kind of operation is more difficult than attaching a cadaveric organ, because four sets of very tiny blood vessels and a bile duct must be painstakingly separated in both the donor and recipient, then reconnected. What makes it possible are the latest tools of micro-surgery.

Zahir's operation took 14 hours, nearly double what it should have. One of his arteries, weakened by the hepatitis, collapsed in the midst of the operation and a new one had to be fashioned from the artery to his spleen, a tricky but not unforeseen complication. All four surgeons from the transplant unit ended up working on Zahir; he received 26 units of blood.

For donors, the biggest dangers from the operation are excessive bleeding and blood clots that might travel up an artery and cause a stroke, a fear that is reduced by the use of blood thinners. For the recipient, the major risks are rejection, infection (the immunosuppressive drugs increase the risk of minor infections and more serious ones like pneumonia) and bleeding (the new liver needs time to make blood-clotting proteins). Zahir survived the surgery, but four days later he was back in the operating room to drain an infection—E. coli, a virulent strain.

What followed was the delicate balancing act of organ rejection as his doctors pulled back on the drugs needed to welcome the new organ—the ones that suppress his immune system—so they could crank the system up again with antibiotics. Eight days after the initial operation, as Edith was leaving the hospital, Zahir had his best day: he was up and walking the halls on his own. Edith saw him just before she left for home. But when Alison arrived in the early evening, she had trouble waking him. She realized something was terribly wrong. Zahir was rushed back into surgery but it was too late: the E. coli-weakened artery had broken and he had been bleeding internally. He died that night.

To those who knew him, Zahir was a larger than life character—a kind, happy-go-lucky man who had travelled the world, and become so Canadian he required regular postings on the Toronto Maple Leafs, even on his sickbed. Nearly 350 people from many different walks of life showed up for his funeral.

One unanticipated loss was that of TGH as a touchstone, both for Edith and Alison. The buildup to a transplant is so intense that the surgeons and social workers can seem closer than family as the case progresses. Shortly after Zahir's death, Alison was numbed by guilt: should they have waited a little, she was asking herself, until they were sure he was stronger? A month later, she had a different perspective. "I've been over it a hundred times in my mind. Zahir had the best surgeons, the best care and the closest family anyone could have had. I think all you can say is that, with hep C, the longer you wait the more susceptible you are to a fatal outcome because it eats away at your liver and your immune system." Much better, she said, to transplant as early as possible, before you waste life's precious energy on a waiting list. "The weaker a person gets," she says, "the harder it is."

For Edith, the guilt was much more personal. "I sat here," she said, in her one-bedroom apartment, "and wondered, 'Was it my fault?'" She is a strong, cultured woman who reads widely and believes in self-improvement. She is also someone who suffered four stillbirths. "I wondered," she allowed once in a very small voice, "if I was capable of giving life."

But in the weeks following Zahir's death, Grant assured her there had been no problem with her liver. And she consoled herself with the fact that in his last weeks, from the time she called to tell him of the date of the operation, Zahir Ismail was a changed man. He bounded into the office to renew old acquaintances. He was happy and playful again, not sick and depressed, and that

TO THOSE who knew him, Zahir was a larger-than-life character—a kind, happy go-lucky man. Nearly 350 people from many different walks of life were at his funeral.

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S



Edith, holding Zahir's hand in the hospital, has returned to work, her liver now regrown

would be the memory his daughter would have of him. As Alison says, "at least he didn't die in a futile way, waiting and wondering whether someone else would have to lose a loved one" so that he might gain an organ.

Six weeks after her operation, Edith went back to her job as a legal assistant at the health ministry, early by some people's accounts. She needed something to take her mind off what happened. Her liver is now back to its normal size. She has a huge scar across her stomach but the pain—like a clawing at her insides was how she described it—has eased.

Edith is a hero to some, which causes her no end of embarrassment. One young man in his mid-20s, a son of friends, who heard of her story called a hospital to inquire about becoming a living donor. And her co-workers have rallied around, helping in the early going with meals and showering on her the hopes and dreams they had held for her and Zahir. Edith and Alison have also become close, a friendship born of long afternoon talks in a hospital ward and a sacrifice that goes beyond the norm.

"What Edith did was the biggest contradiction on the status of our world today," says Alison, "because it was a completely selfless act. It was about caring and having a sense of responsibility for other people. It is the kind of thing we want our children to learn." Given the outcome, Alison says, it was doubly generous. "I can't begin to imagine if I had been the one to donate to Zahir and lost him and been in recovery myself. Not being able to be there for my daughter in the way that I had to be."

Advocates of living donations like to make two points: that the process can bring families together and that they provide earlier, more timely intervention. But both have to be taken with a grain of reality. Living-donor recipients tend to be sicker than patients who get cadaveric organs. And the hurdles to being a living donor are considerable. Any hint of reward or of long-term health consequences and you are disqualified. At TGH, only one in five makes the grade.

Still, this is undoubtedly the way of the future. Ontario, for one, is making a huge commitment to transplant medicine, including a promised $27.5-million gift to TGH to help double, perhaps even triple, its program over the next five years. Part of this plan is to increase the number of cadaveric donations through public appeals, possibly following the Spanish example of having donor advocates at major trauma hospitals. Spain also has a system of presumed consent, which some here support. But with waiting lists getting longer, and with demand for livers especially expected to spike upwards—an offshoot of the tainted blood problems in the 1980s—living donation will have to pick up the slack.

Both types bring their own distinct costs—standby surgical teams and hired aircrews for cadaveric removals, a double set of front-line staff for living donations. There are also ethical considerations. Should a scarce organ go to a prisoner serving a long sentence? To someone with a life-threatening disease like AIDS? Or to someone, say, in their 70s?

The yardsticks are constantly moving. Surgeons in Winnipeg and Edmonton have attempted living lung transplants, using portions of a lung from two donors for someone in need. But an adult donor who gives up part of a lung will go on to live a somewhat diminished life. For many parents that would be an acceptable trade-off to save a child. If living lung transplants become routine, today's strict rules about donor eligibility will almost certainly change to accommodate that greater degree of sacrifice.

And what about patients who don't meet the criteria for a waiting list? Perhaps they have a cancerous tumour on their liver but they also have a close friend or a spouse who wants to donate an organ and improve their quality of life, if only for a time. The technology has arrived. A liver today, a lung tomorrow, literally the breath of life. How many Ediths are really out there? M



SURGEON David Grant was lured back to his native city to launch the Toronto General's living donor program

A DECADE'S DEARTH OF DONORS

Patients waiting for transplants

	'93	'94	'95	'96	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02
Kidney	1,901	1,865	2,126	2,390	2,383	2,585	2,808	3,027	3,014	2,963
Liver	65	110	149	209	230	286	318	338	414	559
Heart	77	99	98	96	97	120	101	89	112	103
Lung	72	53	141	85	104	127	157	166	149	138
Kidney-pancreas	14	17	21	30	35	86	100	128	165	122
Other organs	21	15	17	19	25	25	30	52	110	71
Total	2,150	2,159	2,592	2,829	2,874	3,229	3,514	3,800	3,964	3,956
Died on waiting list	153	139	114	115	171	140	223	169	195	237

Source: Canadian Institute for Health Information

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER SIEGL/MACLEAN'S

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CANADA'S IDOL GOES GLOBAL

In London, SHANDA DEZIEL chronicles our guy's campaign for world stardom

RYAN MALCOLM WOULD LIKE to see his face on the front of *Maclean's*. Lying on a leather couch in his record company's Toronto office, he points out that the magazine did a cover story on *Canadian Idol* this fall and ran a picture of the show's host with the headline "And the winner is... Ben Mulroney." "No, he isn't," says Malcolm. "I am. Just because thousands of people don't hate my father, I don't get the cover." He's joking—kind of.

Two weeks later, in mid-December, the *Canadian Idol* host and champion are both in London for the taping of *World Idol*—where *Idol* winners from 11 countries or regions are competing against each other (the special airs on Christmas Day, while the victory show will be broadcast on New Year's Day). Here, Malcolm's magazine cover sensitivity really flares up. His CTV publicist mentions that all the TV guides in Canada will be putting Malcolm on the cover for *World Idol*—except Vancouver's *TV Week*, which is featuring *American Idol*'s Kelly Clarkson. "They're putting Kelly on the cover?" Malcolm says, freaking out. "That's kind of insulting. That upsets me. How is that fair? In my own country? I'm the Canadian idol, she's the American idol. This is what I deal with on a daily basis." When Malcolm takes a breath, he says he doesn't hold this against Clarkson. "She's a sweet girl, and if I told her about this she'd probably cry." (Well, Clarkson didn't shed any tears, but she was sympathetic. "That's a little weird," she told *Maclean's* later. "I'd get mad at the States if they did that. But he shouldn't take it hard—that kind of stuff happens all the time.")

HIS CD
No. 4 on the charts, but the strain of being in constant competition since April is beginning to show

It's quite obvious that this skinny, 24-year-old kid needs to develop thicker skin. These days, the former waiter from Kingston, Ont., who can be sweet and kind, bristles at every slight, and hides his insecurities behind sarcasm and mock cockiness. While out taping segments with the CTV crew in London, he says things like, "Idol coming through," or "I'll put CTV on the map," or "Who's the winner here?" As annoying as that gets, he's good on TV, quick-witted, charming and completely professional, quietly suffering through two days of shooting in rainy London. But Malcolm does seem to be buckling under the pressure of instant celebrity and constant scrutiny. He isn't smiling, he looks anxious, and his stomach has been hurting for two weeks. Since his audition for *Canadian Idol* in April, his life has been one constant competition—he triumphed over 16,000 singers at home, and now he faces 10 other victors abroad. On top of that, the Dec. 9 release of his debut CD, *Home*, has him fighting for a spot on the charts, a place in your stocking and respect as an artist.

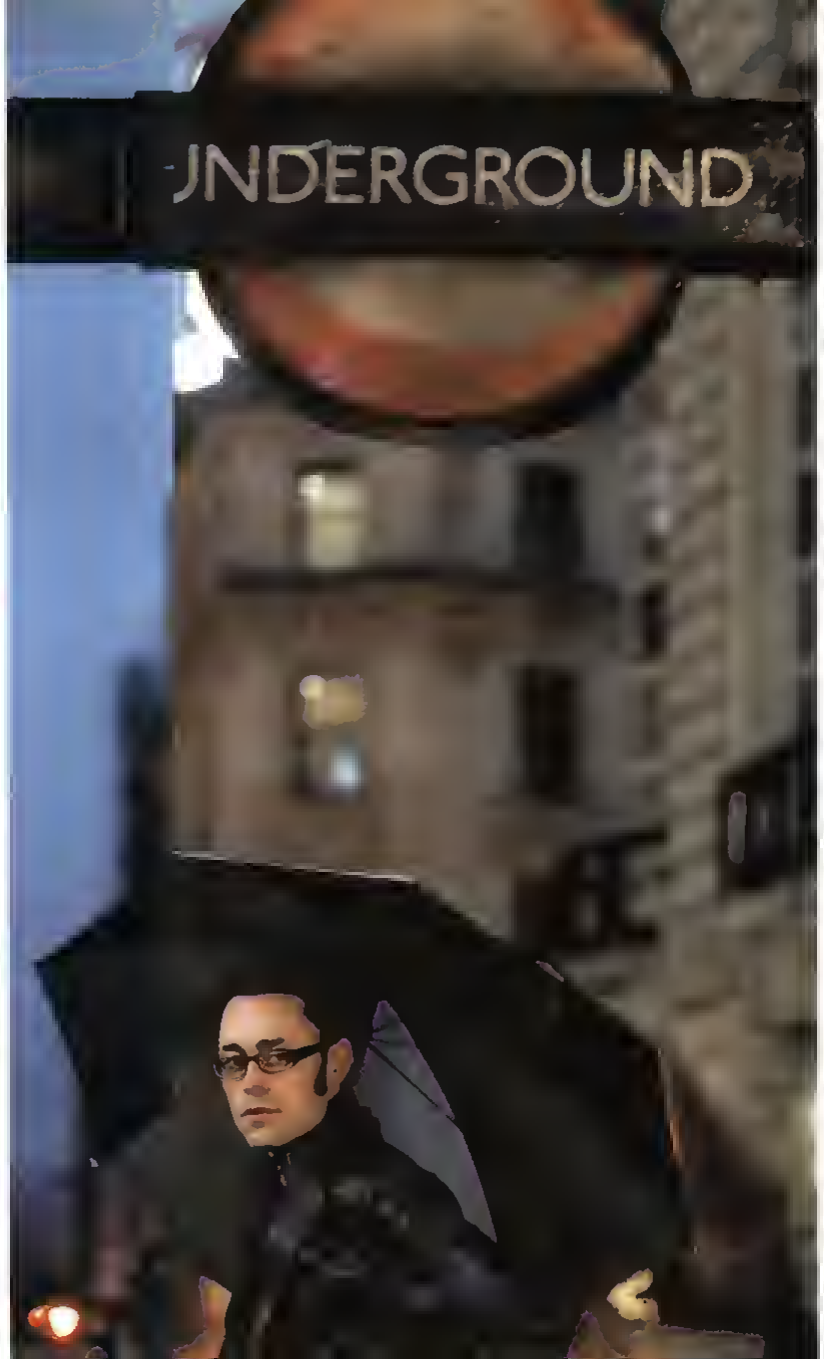
Malcolm collaborated with 40 songwriters (including Randy Bachman and Luke McMaster) for the album. They generated more than 100 songs, 15 of which made it to *Home*. "People expect a poppy kind of album," says Malcolm, "and there are some pop songs. But mostly it's sort of pop-rock. I think people know that about me by now. I think they know I'm a little less mainstream than some other people." It is pretty poppy, with sappy love songs and tracks as goofy as their titles (*You Made This Fool Become a Man*, *I Gotta Be Me*). But the up-tempo *Crash & Burn*, and the title ballad, offer genuine energy and emotion. It's unfortunate Malcolm wasn't able to capitalize on the more rootsy, classic rock and Blue Rodeo leanings he showed on the TV program. (Mind you, *Home* is a thousand times better than the CDs by some of his male *World Idol* counterparts. When compared to the manufactured, sugary trash of the German and the South African, Malcolm's album seems eclectic and recognizably Canadian.)

The numbers are on Malcolm's side. In its first week, he sold more than 29,000 CDs, placing him No. 4 on the charts, above Sheryl Crow and Nickelback. All over the world, idols' CDs have broken sales records. But Malcolm wouldn't mind, as he puts it, some "street cred" as well. He's bothered by the fact most of the musicians he likes—Coldplay, Dave Matthews, Sam Roberts, Sloan—probably think he's got no business being in the business. "My view is that a lot of artists in Canada don't like me," he says. "I've met some who totally snub me, and I think it's rude. I think musicians should stick together no matter how they got here."

Malcolm feels like he's earned his position. He's been singing since he was 12 in an oldies' band, A Bit of Nostalgia, with his father and brother, at casinos and restaurants. He plays the guitar, recorded a demo, hosted open mike nights and had a Phish cover band with some buddies. He recognizes that his songwriting isn't very good yet, but thinks his vocal talent should be recognized. "I worked my butt off for 12 years to get where I am," he says. "It's not like I turned on the TV, decided to audition and here I am. But whatever, I don't need them to know that." After all, right now in London, staying in the same hotel, are 10 other people who know exactly what he's talking about.

THE MEETING OF THE IDOLS

The call time is 9:45 a.m., in the lobby of



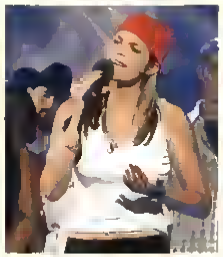
In the British capital for *World Idol*, Malcolm displayed his vocal talent and skill on camera, but also exposed some pretty thin skin

PHOTOGRAPH BY RANDY QUAN

HOW THE OTHERS HAVE FARED

FOR MONTHS they performed live in front of a national TV audience of as many as three million. But by the end, all but one of the *Canadian Idol* finalists had been kicked off the stage, their dreams seemingly shattered. We all know what's happened to Canada's prince of pop, Ryan Malcolm, since the Sept. 16 finale—he's toured the country, released his debut album, *Home*, and jetted to London to compete in *World Idol*. But what have the three almost-idols been up to?

Although she finished fourth, **Audrey de Montigny**—*la belle chanteuse* from *la belle province*—is so far the big winner. The 18-year-old is the only other finalist to score a record deal, with a half-French, half-English album due out early next year. BMG Canada (the label that reserved the right to first dibs on all of *Idol*'s top contenders) picked up its option on the native of Ste-Julienne, no doubt aware that the public support behind Quebec's star system (think Celine Dion) will serve the sultry Québécois singer, and itself, quite well.



AUDREY DE MONTIGNY



GARY BEALS



BILLY KLIPPERT

While the other finalists have yet to sign deals, that could soon change, since their BMG commitment expired last week. Wasting no time, third-place finisher **Billy Klippert** immediately began his search for a label to represent him and will spend January writing and recording music, backed by his long-time band *Kovered in Lies*. He's hoping against hope to have a CD on store shelves in February. "I want to make a good, mainstream rock album and get the songs on the radio," says Klippert, whose earnings have spiked since his pre-*Idol* days, which were spent busking and teaching guitar in his hometown of Calgary. "I'm definitely in a new tax bracket. At some corporate gigs I've made $3,500 for four minutes. It's nuts, but great for me."

And while *Idol* runner-up **Gary Beals** is no Clay Aiken (the American runner-up), he's also been busy with public appearances—including a gig with the show's final four at a fundraiser for Paul Martin earlier this month in Toronto. He just finished taping a TV commercial for Aliant, an Atlantic Canada cellphone service provider, and is doing a lot of thinking about his career options. "I'm doing some recording and I've talked with some smaller labels," says the 21-year-old, who's back home in Dartmouth, N.S. "The exposure from *Idol* made all this possible, and I'd consider moving to Toronto or another large Canadian city if I feel I need to get myself out there even more." Beals, like the other unsuccessful finalists, is determined not to be remembered as one of the singers who lost to that *Canadian Idol* kid. JOHN INTINI

THE WOULD-BE WORLD IDOLS AND THEIR ODDS

THE TOP THREE

KELLY CLARKSON (U.S.) A down-home girl with a powerhouse voice, Clarkson beat out curly haired heartthrob Justin Guarini—then starred with him in the worst movie of 2003, *From Justin to Kelly*. But the singing career of this former cocktail waitress from Texas is still going strong, and she's favoured to win the *World Idol* title (5-2 odds).



KELLY CLARKSON

WILL YOUNG (U.K.) The original *Pop Idol* and a big star at home, Young, 24, is openly gay, has a poli-sci degree, and can converse about pop iconography and capitalism. He favours jazz standards but will perform the Doors' *Light My Fire* at *World Idol*. Oddsmakers have him as runner-up to Clarkson (3-1).

GUY SEBASTIAN (AUSTRALIA) Possibly the most musically proficient of the bunch, Sebastian is a high-school vocal coach and recording engineer who plays piano, drums and guitar—and is a prolific songwriter. But it's thought the 22-year-old Pentecostal Church singer won the first *Australian Idol* because he declared he's a virgin and won't have sex until he's married (6-1).

THE MIDDLE CONTESTANTS:

ALEXANDER KLAWS (GERMANY) Known as the housewife's favourite, Klaws, 20, nearly dropped out of the German competition in the semifinals because of inflamed vocal chords (8-1).

HEINZ WINCKLER (SOUTH AFRICA) After winning his country's title, this hunky law student, 25, provided the theme song to the Disney movie *Treasure Planet* (8-1).

RYAN MALCOLM (CANADA) Oddsmakers have our guy tied for sixth place (10-1).

JAMAI LOMAN (NETHERLANDS) The youngest idol, 17-year-old Loman was a high-school student before winning the competition and a recording contract (10-1).

ALICJA JANOSZ (POLAND) This 18-year-old student looks like a cross between Bjork and Avril Lavigne, and sings in an Avril-ish pop-punk style (14-1).

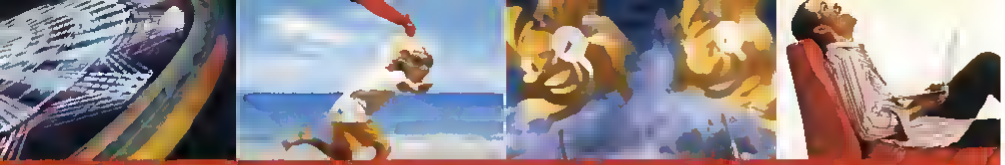
THE BOTTOM THREE:

PETER EVRARD (BELGIUM) The oldest contestant, Evrard is a 29 year-old construction worker, married and with two sons. Known for his long hair and what the Belgians call a "satanic goatee," Evrard will be the only world idoler who dabbles in heavy metal (14-1).

KURT NILSEN (NORWAY) This 25-year-old small-town plumber, who has two kids with his long-time girlfriend, has achieved minor success with his band, Fenrik Lane. Its first single, a cover of Canadian Tal Bachman's *She's So High*, was No. 1 in Norway for 11 weeks (20-1).

DIANA KARAZON (JORDAN) Karazon, a 19-year-old aviation student, battled finalists from 12 nations to become the first Arab Idol—and the only one on this list who doesn't sing in English. On the second-to-last episode of the dramatic Arabic competition, Karazon and her competitor, a young woman from Syria, both fainted on live TV and had to be carried offstage (20-1).



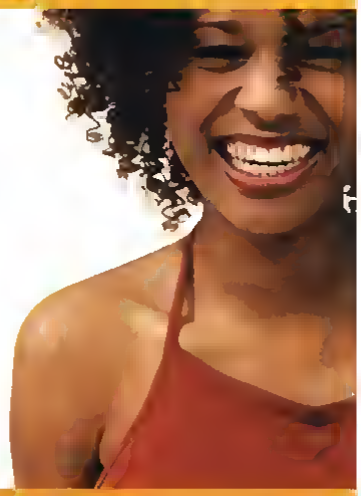


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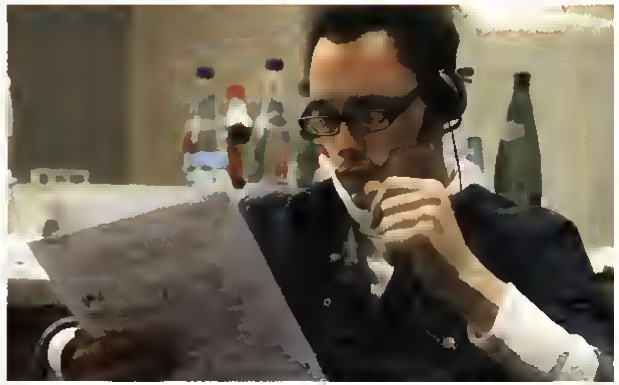
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the Marriott County Hall on the south bank of the Thames, across from Big Ben and the Houses of Parliament. The first idol to arrive, at 9:30, is the Netherlands' Jamai Loman, a puffier version of Malcolm, in orange tinted eyeglasses, a wool coat and a pinkish scarf. Next in is Norway's Kurt Nilsen, a former plumber and father of two, who goes to the opposite side of the room. At 9:40 Malcolm walks in and chooses yet a third spot instead of joining one of the others. Things are getting uncomfortable. It's Australia's adorable Guy Sebastian, blond hunks Alexander Klaws and Heinz Winckler of Germany and South Africa respectively, and the competition's black sheep, long-haired, heavy metal Belgian rocker Peter Evrard, who get the party started. They all join Loman, introducing themselves and kibitzing as each country's camera crew tries to capture the magic moment. Malcolm's still playing shy.

The Canadian idol is finally recognized by a crew from another country and is brought into the circle. Thanks to his European designer, J. Lindeberg, and talented makeup artist, Shelley Lashley, Malcolm doesn't look out of place in this sea of outrageously expensive jeans, trendy sneakers and perfectly gelled hair. The idols all give off the same inexplicable glow. According to Malcolm, as soon as Clarkson, dressed down in a hat, scarf, overcoat and baggy jeans, makes her way into the group, the dynamic changes. For the rest of the day, as the idols are filmed sightseeing, the focus is on the American. "A lot of the idols brought their own camera crews," says Malcolm. "Kelly didn't bring a crew, but the crew for *World Idol* was all about Kelly. And Will Young didn't even show up." England's Young, who was the winner of the very first *Pop Idol* 22 months ago, made only a quick appearance, giving the impression he really didn't want to be in this competition. Despite feeling snubbed, Malcolm wins over his peers. "Is he perhaps the wittiest person I've ever met?" asks Clarkson. "He's so quick. We were sitting down eating dinner and this lady came over and introduced herself to us and I said to her, 'I'm Kelly,' and he goes, 'Hi, I'm Clay.'"



The show has none of the heart of *Canadian Idol*, and it's hard to tell who deserves to win

THE PARTY

Two nights before the competition, Malcolm has invited all the idols to a party CTV is throwing at the Maple Leaf Pub in Covent Garden. A half-hour in, none of his guests has arrived. "I'm going back to the hotel to round them up," he says, unable to sit still. He's back at the pub within 40 minutes, idols in tow—only Young, Clarkson and Klaws are no-shows. Belgian rocker Evrard is wearing a Canadian Roots Olympic scarf he brought with him to England, the South African contingent is downing Canadian whiskey, and Poland's 18-year-old pixie Alicja Janosz has been cornered by an eccentric, much older musician, Ben Darvill, formerly of Canada's Crash Test Dummies. Strangest of all is the non-English-speaking Arab idol, Diana Karazon of Jordan, wearing a Santa Claus hat and singing "I wish you Merry Christmas."

If there's any misbehaving at the party it's from the home team. After a couple of pints, *Canadian Idol*'s nasty judge, Zack Werner, admits he hasn't listened to Malcolm's album. "I don't f---ing care," he says. While he's proud of the show and was moved by the *Canadian Idol* experience, he doesn't give the participants much respect. The talent manager liked only two of the singers, signed none and thinks the rest

IDOL'S ANTECEDENTS

Pitting wannabe celebrities against one another has long been a successful radio and TV formula. Here are some of the shows that not only kickstarted the careers of several big names, but also set the benchmark to which all good, and really bad, talent shows aspire

ORIGINAL AMATEUR HOUR (1934-1970) The show, which shifted from radio to TV in 1948, helped launch **Gladys Knight** and **Pat Boone**, among others. Audiences members at home voted for the weekly winner via postcard.

ARTHUR GODFREY'S TALENT SCOUTS (1948-1958) Contestants performed live before a national radio and TV audience, and an applause meter determined the weekly winner. Many participants were struggling professionals, so the talent level was quite high. Exposure from the show helped **Patsy Cline** revive her career in the late '50s. Meanwhile, **Elvis Presley** and **Buddy Holly** tried out but failed to make the grade.

THE GONG SHOW (1976-1980) In this parody of amateur talent shows, celebrity guests did the judging. The acts tended toward the outrageous, from a dentist who played *The Stars and Stripes Forever* on his drill, to an obese man tap-dancing to the music from *Swan Lake*. Contestants deemed awful were "gonged," and the winner took home the grand prize of US$516.32. Well before *Late Show*, **David Letterman** was a regular judge.

STAR SEARCH (1983-1995) Host **Ed McMahon** took the talent show genre to a whole new level. Judges awarded "stars" to young hopefuls in singing, dancing, modelling and stand-up comedy. Perhaps winners **Britney Spears**, **Drew Carey**, **Justin Timberlake**, **Rosie O'Donnell**, **Dennis Miller** and **Sinbad**—as well as *Star Search* losers **Christina Aguilera**, **Beyoncé Knowles**, **Alanis Morissette**, **Ray Romano** and **LeAnn Rimes**—should all offer McMahon a cut of their millions for giving them their first break or, at least, their first exposure. JOHN INTINI

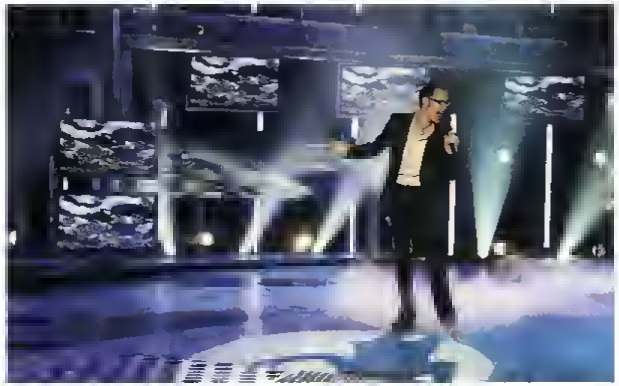
PHOTOGRAPH BY RANDY QUAN; (FOLLOWING PAGE) COURTESY OF CTV

(including Malcolm) should know "they're contestants, not Coldplay"

THE SHOW

"My one word to describe this show is disgusting," Malcolm says night after the Dec 16 taping. "The judges were a bunch of arrogant people that thought the show was about them. I'm almost embarrassed to be a part of it." Malcolm's reaction could have something to do with the fact that the judges weren't fond of him, calling his rendition of *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother* devoid of emotion and personality. But what did Malcolm expect? All the countries sent their mean judges, including Werner, Brit Simon Cowell and a rude lunatic from Poland.

Unfortunately, Malcolm is the worst of the *World Idol* contestants at hiding his feelings. Almost all the others smile their way through the after-party, but Malcolm bitches to anyone who'll listen. "I didn't even want to perform in this, I came to see Kelly and Will and the other idols. We're all recording artists—we don't need this show." Malcolm takes little comfort in the fact that when CTV edits the program for Canada, the audience will see only half a dozen critiques as opposed to the 11-person firing squad he had faced. And CTV will no doubt use some of the judges' kinder words for Malcolm. "It was World Judge," he insists, ignoring any soothing words, "not *World Idol*."



Malcolm's version of *He Ain't Heavy, He's My Brother* didn't go over well with the judges

Even for the spectator, the show isn't fabulous—it has none of the heart of *Canadian Idol*. With only one song from each contender, it's hard to tell why many of these idols were picked at home, let alone which one deserves the world title. Clarkson seems in a different vocal league than the others with a powerful, if overly trilling, rendition of *Natural Woman*, and Sebastian seems to have the most stage presence. The best overall performance is from the astonishingly strong-voiced Nilsen, who closes the show with U2's *Beautiful Day*. But the only idol who makes me want to buy his album is Young, whose poise, jazzy voice and reserved soulfulness make an impression.

THE VERDICT

After the show, Malcolm and his manager, Jeff Rogers, leave for vacation in Morocco. They'll be back in London for the live show on Jan. 1. Whatever happens, Malcolm will have displayed his singing talent to the world. But by competing in these contests, hamming it up on CTV and publicly moaning about how unfairly he's been treated, he's lost the essential mystique that surrounds cool Canadian rock stars like Sam Roberts, Cord Downie or Buck 65. "I'm just a funny kind of guy," he concedes. "I really like to be in front of the camera. It's me being able to act. I'll stick to singing right now, but if that doesn't work out, I can try acting." Not a bad idea. He might even score his own show, or take over *Canadian Idol* hosting duties from Mulroney. And maybe then, Ryan Malcolm could get himself more magazine covers. M

For more Idol coverage visit
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Kidman and Law in *Cold Mountain*, a movie of terrible beauty and grave consequence

INFERNAL ODYSSEYS

Bringing it all back home for the holidays



WHERE IS HOME, and how will we ever find our way back? In this year's holiday movies, that seems to be *the* question. Whether it's Frodo trekking to the ends of Middle Earth in *The Return of the King*, or a Civil War deserter trudging across North Carolina in *Cold Mountain*, 'tis the season for infernal odysseys ending with the over-the-rainbow coda that there's no place like home. In *Big Fish*, a small-town wanderer embarks on a mythic journey through a surreal circus of exotic characters. In *Elf*, an overgrown pixie travels from Santa's workshop to workaholic Manhattan on a quest to get a cuddle from his biological father. In *Calendar Girls* and *Cheaper by the Dozen*, sugar plum visions of fame and fortune drive modest folk from hamlets to big cities, and back again. In a tarted-up *Peter Pan*, Wendy makes it home from Neverland after flying off with a leering Lost Boy—who looks like he got lost on the way to bonk Brooke Shields in *The Blue Lagoon*. And in *Something's Gotta Give*, Hollywood's Peter Pan emeritus, Jack Nicholson, finally reaches the end of the road as a rogue, and stumbles into the arms of a nurturing Diane Keaton. The overriding message in these movies is that you can, and must, go home again—even if that's a disastrous option, as Jennifer Connelly's character discovers in *House of Sand and Fog*.

Last week, in reviewing *The Return of the King*, I made passing reference to Homer's *Odyssey* and Dante's *Inferno*. With **Cold Mountain**, those two archetypal sagas spring to mind once again. The movie is based on the richly imagined 1997 novel by Charles Frazier, who used *The Odyssey* as an armature for his story. And it's the one film in a crowded field of pre-20th-century combat epics that portrays war as cruel tragedy rather than glorious gladiatorial sport. For British writer-director Anthony Minghella, *Cold Mountain* marks a return to the soul-scarred terrain of *The English Patient*—if only because it's another sweeping literary saga of lovers separated by war, with a narrative that toggles between two time frames, and

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a wounded hero clutching a tattered book.

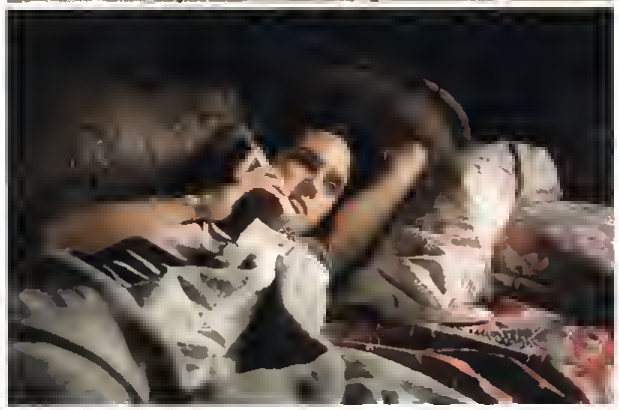
Although its story takes some time to get in gear, *Cold Mountain* is a movie of terrible beauty and grave consequence, establishing Minghella as Hollywood's epic poet—a more rigorous, less rhapsodic David Lean. And at its heart, as a Confederate deserter named Inman, Jude Law quietly delivers the year's most artfully distilled dramatic performance. Although he spends half the movie hiding behind a heavy beard, and doesn't have much dialogue, he reminds us that the power of great screen acting comes down to an intangible truth behind the eyes.

Rather than simply transposing the novel, Minghella transforms it, excising scenes and inventing new ones, as he did with *The English Patient*. The book opens with the hero recuperating in a battlefront hospital—which might have looked too much like *The American Patient* onscreen. Instead Minghella opens the movie with a horrific battle scene drawn from the history books. After tunnelling under Confederate lines and detonating a massive charge of underground explosives, Union troops swarm into the resulting sinkhole, only to become targets in a lethal trap of their own making. With the horrific lyricism of a contemporary Goya, Minghella depicts the fray as a barbaric mosh pit of blurred bodies, a liquid grave of mud and blood and meat.

This is the hell that Inman flees as he makes his way back home to Ada (Nicole Kidman), a sweetheart he's barely met years earlier, they exchanged just one passionate kiss before he went marching off to war. On the road, he encounters an picaresque array of characters, including a reverend (Philip Seymour Hoffman) who has knocked up a slave girl, a whoring gang of hillbilly sirens, a widowed mother who wants him to warm her bed (Natalie Portman), and a goat-tending crone who treats his wounds (Eileen Atkins).

Meanwhile, back on the farm, Ada, an elegant Charleston belle, struggles to survive with Ruby (Renee Zellweger), a rugged drifter who shows up on her doorstep and proves to be a virtuoso Jill-of-all-trades. Whether wringing a rooster's neck or biting off rude lines of dialogue, Zellweger attacks her tomboy role with deadpan bravado, her features almost disappearing behind a ferocious squint and a scolding pout. As for Kidman, her movie-star poise strikes the movie's only false note. Especially when her character is supposed to be roughing it on the farm, I kept being distracted by her hair and makeup, wondering where she'd find such fine eyeshadow in Appalachia.





Keaton and Nicholson spar gamely. Connelly (above) rises above a dire melodrama

On balance, however, Minghella's poetic gaze is impervious to Hollywood cliché. Though shooting in Romania with British and Australian leads, he conjures the American South with startling fidelity, especially through the music. Actor-fiddler Brendan Gleeson and singer Jack White of the White Stripes ring true as itinerant musicians, playing tender counterpoint to the cruelty of war, which is personified by a sociopath posse of Confederate thugs led by Ray Winstone. Whether America will sit still for an anti-war movie from foreigners is another matter. When Ada writes to Inman and begs him to stop fighting, she refers to "every fool sent off to fight with a flag and a lie." And there's no doubt that Minghella's is referring to fresher conflicts than the Civil War.

House of Sand and Fog is the other politically inflected tragedy opening over the holidays—on Boxing Day, to be precise. If you're looking for an antidote to all that cosy Christmas cheer, and are dying to escape into a fantasy of harrowing despair, this could be just the ticket. Based on the 1999 bestseller by Andre Dubus III, the story concerns Kathy (Jennifer Connelly), a careless victim of a bureaucratic error who's evicted from her family home, a bungalow off the

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coast of northern California. The house is then promptly auctioned off at a fraction of its value. The buyer is a hard working Iranian immigrant (Ben Kingsley)—a former colonel under the Shah's regime—who moves in with his family but intends to flip the property. As Kathy and the colonel become locked in a bitter feud, she finds an ally, and suitor, in a shifty deputy sheriff (Ron Eldard) who reignites her drinking problem.

Without giving away any more, let's just say that the plot acquires the momentum of a train wreck. The moral lines are drawn too starkly in the sand—sloppy California girl versus steely Iranian patriarch. But Connelly and Kingsley both rise above the script with complex performances. The film marks the feature debut of writer-director Vadim Perelman, 40, a Soviet-born refugee who settled in Toronto after a grim childhood. Now based in Los Angeles, where he's forged a career making TV commercials, he has created a taut melodrama that pulls no punches as it eviscerates the American Dream.

Mona Lisa Smile tries to subvert another domestic dream, the ambition of '50s American college girls to become successful housewives. Julia Roberts stars as Katherine, a beleaguered art history professor at all-female Wellesley College in 1953. Katherine is a feminist voice in the crinoline wilderness, struggling to teach her students to become freethinkers, just like her. Directed by Mike Newell (*Four Weddings and a Funeral*), this earnest drama has a sharp young cast—Julia Stiles as the protege, Kirsten Dunst as the snob, Maggie Gyllenhaal as the slut. But Roberts is miscast, lost in a role that doesn't allow her to dazzle, and the story is strangely flat. You have to wonder why anyone felt compelled to make a distaff *Dead Poets Society* with the tired message that women should have minds of their own.

Calendar Girls offers a more contemporary, and comic, tale of female empowerment. Based on a true story, it's about members of the Rylstone Women's Institute in a north Yorkshire village who decide to strip for charity. WI groups are known for plum jams and baking cakes, but after a great deal of trepidation a dozen of the women agree to pose in the nude for a calendar (with the naughty bits strategically covered up). All they want to do is buy a couch for the waiting room of the local hospital, but they create a media frenzy that spreads all the way to America.

Leading a phalanx of fiftysomething English actresses, a saucy Helen Mirren plays Chris, who spearheads the campaign, and a soulful Julie Walters plays Annie, who loses her husband to leukemia in the underfunded hospital. With a script that aims for obvious laughs, this female *Full Monty* is slow to take off. The cute notion of middle-aged women posing discreetly in the nude is not that shocking, or that funny. Things only get interesting when egos start to clash. As the calendar girls collide with an onslaught of glamour and hype, the film turns into a frisky fish-out-of-water comedy—middle aged dames dress up and do Leno. And, like a work of post-modern needlepoint, the film we're watching becomes the ultimate product of the phenomenon it describes.

Something's Gotta Give is another movie that finds the idea of middle-aged nudity nothing short of hilarious. It has one of those generic Hollywood titles that could be used for just about anything, not unlike the title of Jack Nicholson's previous romantic comedy, *As Good As It Gets* (1997). After a dignified detour to play a lost accountant in last year's *About Schmidt*, Jack is up to his old tricks in a triple-cream confection for aging boomers. Cast as a flamboyant Lothario addicted to romances with much younger women, he plays himself more transparently than ever before. And in Diane Keaton, he's found a game sparring partner.

Harry (Nicholson), a big-time record executive, considers any woman over 30 to be stale-dated. While gamboling with the coltish Marin (Amanda Peet) at her mother's beach house in the Hamptons, he suffers a heart attack. Marin's divorced mother, a wildly successful playwright named Erica (Keaton), somehow agrees to nurse him back to health. And against their better judgment, Harry and Erica fall in love, even though Erica is being courted by Harry's handsome young doctor, who's a perfect gentleman *and* a huge fan of her work. (But with a bland Keanu Reeves cast in the role, there's some suggestion that he lacks balls.)

The script is larded with sight gags—from Harry's bare butt hanging out of a hospital gown to the childish shrieks that erupt when he catches a glimpse of Erica in the nude. There are tender moments amid the shtick. And there's some pleasure in watching the abrasive chemistry between Nicholson and Keaton, two actors who can enrich the lightest flirtation with layers of innuendo. In the end, what's most middle-aged about *Something's Gotta Give* is the flab of its two hour duration. And Nancy Meyers, the movie's writer-director-producer is perhaps overempowered, she doesn't know when to stop. She's also created a rather perverse feminist romance, with a heroine who weans a man off younger women by mothering him.

No holiday movie season would be complete without sweet family fables. This year there's a slew of them—mostly father son stories—and the most ambitious is Tim Burton's **Big Fish**. It consists of fantasy flashbacks framed by a realistic scenario of a skeptical son (Billy Crudup) reconciling with an ailing father, a self-mythologizing blowhard named Edward Bloom (Albert Finney). As dad spins tall tales of his adventures, Ewan McGregor plays Edward as a young man, a world traveller whose life is carnival of weird encounters: werewolves, conjoined Korean crooners, a giant, an oracular witch—and a huge, uncatchable fish. The film unfolds like an edgier *Forrest Gump*, an entertaining sideshow of surreal whimsy. But although it's *about* emotion, I couldn't get past its impenetrable cleverness. *Big Fish* left me cold.

Elf is a stupider but more affecting father-son fable, the kind of surefire Hollywood fare that makes you laugh, and cry, while feeling like an idiot. Buddy (Will Ferrell), a human adopted by Santa's elves, travels from the North Pole to Manhattan in search of his father (James Caan), a Scrooge-like publisher of children's books. Ferrell plays it wonderfully straight as a childlike galoot blundering through an adult world, like Tom Hanks in *Big*. *Elf* has a split level humour that plays to both adults and children. But stay away from **Peter Pan**, a garish remake with a predatory Pan and a bitchy Tink who acts like she's on angel dust, not fairy dust. Then there's **Bad Santa**, one of the ughest, most witless movies I've seen in ages—even though it stars Billy Bob Thornton and was directed by Terry Zwigoff (*Ghost World*).

But then, you might ask what Steve Martin is doing squandering his talents in **Cheaper by the Dozen**. In this slapstick farce, he plays a football coach with 12 squabbling children and a wife (Bonnie Hunt) who's a budding author. When he lands his dream job on a major campus, and his wife is whisked off to New York to promote her book, he becomes the cartoon version of the overwhelmed working dad. This is the kind of movie kids will love and adults will tolerate, a brawling but good-natured physical comedy. Personally, I'd rather read Steve Martin writing humour in *The New Yorker* than see him swing from a chandelier. But everyone's got to make a living, especially this time of year.

FICTION-TO-FILM ALCHEMY



Minghella gave *Mountain* a modern spin

"This whole film is Michael's fault," says Anthony Minghella, the British writer-director of *Cold Mountain*. He's referring to his friend Michael Ondaatje, the Canadian author of *The English Patient*. And he's only half-joking. Ondaatje put in a word with author Charles Frazier when Minghella was trying to get the rights to *Cold Mountain*. And the director's adaptation of *The English Patient*—as a wholesale reinvention of the novel—set a daunting precedent.

The two novels presented different challenges. *The English Patient* is "a novel in argument with itself, a poem disguised as a novel," says Minghella. "*Cold Mountain* feels like a novel that was fished out of the waters of the 1870s. There's a big fat story in *Cold Mountain*, and Michael and I spent years trying to figure out where the big fat story was in *The English Patient*."

Both movies are romances set against the backwash of war, but their themes are very different, Minghella adds. "*Cold Mountain* is about people who keep their promises and whose fidelity is tested. *The English Patient* is about the covert and destructive nature of love—the emotion is subversive and secretive and trespassing."

Though set during the Civil War, *Cold Mountain* has a contemporary resonance, which Minghella says is intentional: "I was writing the film after 9/11 and very conscious of the world convulsing. Shooting the movie in Romania had a strange rhyme, because that's a country that's been soaked in blood. One of the things I tried to inflect in the film was the touching naïveté of men being excited about 'getting' their war, with the impression they're marching off to a skirmish that might last a couple of weeks. I tried to italicize those moments in post production."

According to Minghella, who's also a musician and a painter, the guiding spirit of *Cold Mountain* was music. "If there was a virus of violence, I wanted the grace of music spreading," he says with typical eloquence. "Music is always the best of us. It touches us deeper than language." B.D.J.

THE director depicts the fray as a mosh pit of blurred bodies, a liquid grave of mud and blood and flesh

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Personality of the Year

THE MACLEAN'S READERS' CHOICE

Over the past month, readers logged on to www.macleans.ca to vote in our first *Readers' Choice* poll for the most significant news events and personalities in the fields of sport, entertainment and health in 2003.

THE RESULTS ARE IN

Here are your top choices.

Entertainer of the Year
Shania Twain secured her spot among the top tier of divas with the release of an album that led pop and country music charts, making her the best selling female artist of all time.

Athlete of the Year
Mike Weir golfs gracefully – and wins graciously. As the first Canadian to win golf's top prize, the Masters, the 32-year-old made Canada proud and gave the game a boost.

Health-Care Field
Stephen Lewis found his voice as a powerful advocate for the fight against a global scourge in his role as the UN special envoy on AIDS and HIV in Africa.

News Event
SARS, by far, topped our Readers' Choice as news event of the year, from the first deadly infection in Canada to the health-care crisis that changed hospitals forever.

Thanks to all *Maclean's* readers who let their voices be heard!

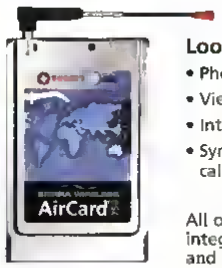
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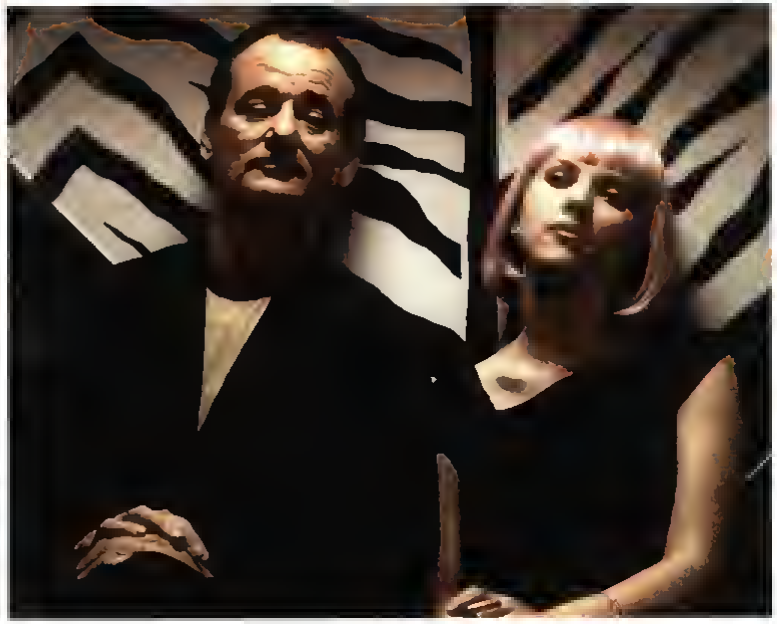
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Film | The best of the best from 2003

It was a year of movies about sword-happy warriors, savage teens, terminal illness—and talking fish. Maclean's *film critic* **Brian D. Johnson** *offers his personal favourites.*

1. Lost In Translation In Sofia Coppola's dreamy slice of Tokyo-under-glass, Bill Murray and Scarlett Johansson glide through a Zen romance that's as ephemeral, and substantial, as film itself.

2. The Barbarian Invasions Boldly equating health care and heroin, intellect and sentiment, Denys Arcand's wry elegy was 2003's most unlikely crowd-pleaser.

3. Cold Mountain In a year of pictures glorifying combat, Anthony Minghella delivered a sweeping anti-war epic with a lustre worthy of David Lean.

4. 21 Grams Sean Penn and Naomi Watts gave the year's rawest performances in Alejandro González Iñárritu's razor-cut, time-scrambled melodrama.

5. Finding Nemo Can't believe I got hooked by a cartoon about a clownfish searching for his widowed father. But thanks to Ellen DeGeneres, it was 2003's best comedy.

6. Spider Featuring a schizophrenic Ralph Fiennes and a shape-shifting Miranda Richardson, David Cronenberg's bleak puzzle was the best picture that nobody saw.

7. Thirteen In this scalding debut from Catherine Hardwicke, teen co-writer Nikki Reed was a mall-rat rebel without a cause.

8. Elephant As America watched a foreign war, *minimalissimo* Gus Van Sant offered a chilling look at the violence within.

9. Kill Bill I'm afraid to see it again, fearing I just got suckered by Quentin's crack-like stimulus. So I'll stick to my guns: Uma rocks.

10. The Lord of the Rings: The Return of the King Although the religiosity of this blue-eyed crusader epic irritated the hell out of me, I can't deny the staggering power, and craft, of Peter Jackson's final kick at the Tolkien can. Call it *Found in Translation*.


Murray and Johansson in Coppola's *Lost in Translation*



Other faves: *The Man Without a Past, Russian Ark, Master and Commander, The Station Agent, Whale Rider, Divine Intervention, Dirty Pretty Things, In the Cut*



Books | The top 10

Canadian fiction kept its focus on the past in 2003—with one prominent exception. Senior Writer **Brian Bethune** *picks the year's finest:*

1. Oryx and Crake
Margaret Atwood
Sardonic and brilliant—a convincing dystopia.

2. The Way the Crow Flies
A. M. MacDonald
Memory turned into art, a mesmerizing recreation of childhood.

3. Black Bird,
Michel Basilières
A hilarious extended metaphor for Canada.

4. The Island Walkers
John Bemrose
A taut story and a superb evocation of place.

5. [illegible]
Douglas Glover
A raucous take on Native-white interaction.

6. [illegible]
M. G. Vassanji
The story of a man not at home anywhere.

7. A Hard Winter,
Jacqueline Baker
Eight austere stories about the human heart.

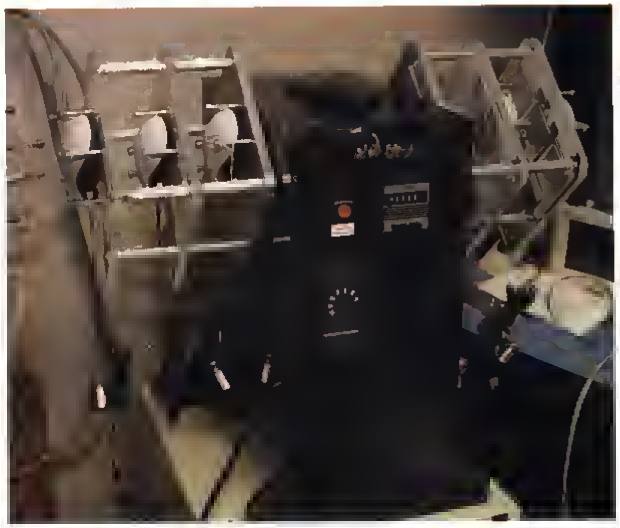
8. [illegible]
Elizabeth Hay
A note perfect study of an obsessive film fan.

9. The Sojourn
Alan Cumyn
A riveting opening cuts to the mystery at the heart of the Great War.

10. The Romantic,
Barbara Gowdy
A finely written look at a girl who loves with an awesome totality.

COURTESY OF ALLIANCE ATLANTIS (TOP); COURTESY OF ALLIANCE ATLANTIS; COURTESY OF BUENA VISTA

Written by Michael Snider
michael.snider@macleans.rogers.com



Hardware | Be afraid—be *very* afraid

Deep within the bowels of Microsoft's Redmond, Wash., campus there exists a room where unspeakable acts are visited daily upon innocent hardware devices. Ominous looking machines with names like the "temperature cycling chamber," the "force-to fire tester" and—most horrifically of all—the "button life tester" wait for their hapless victims. It is here where mad scientists conduct experiments on mice, keyboards and home-networking products to ensure that when you buy them, they work as you expect them to.

So maybe the scientists *aren't* mad. Krishna Darbha, 32, is one of five engineers in Microsoft's Reliability Group. They analyze the devices through an array of physical, chemical, environmental and mechanical examinations. "We do 24 different tests to simulate product storage, shipping and customer usage conditions," says Darbha, who's been with Microsoft for two years.

The force-to-fire machine determines exactly how much finger strength one needs to click a mouse. Next comes the button life tester, a machine that looks like a giant spider with red rubber tips on each long leg. It pounds on a mouse's buttons five times per second, millions of times, to simulate years of button clicking. And then there's the temperature chamber, which subjects the products to conditions ranging from Jamaican heat and humidity to a Saskatchewan winter. But have no fear. Not once has anything ever melted in the chamber. "No," says Darbha, laughing. "We don't torture our mice that badly."

One of Microsoft's torture machines



Software | Speak out

OK computer, listen up. I'm sick of typing. I have enough trouble finding my car keys, let alone the "Q" key. From now on, I talk, *you* type.

Voice-recognition software, while not perfect, is getting much better at drafting documents, sending e-mails and navigating Web pages. I tried out the "preferred" version of ScanSoft Inc.'s Dragon NaturallySpeaking7 and was impressed by its accuracy and range of options. The program memorizes your contact list so that you can send e-mails just by saying the recipient's name. It's also available in other editions, including one that caters to doctors and their medical terminology. Prices range from $80 for the basic "essentials" version to $1,300 for the medical one. But the program has its problems. It's sometimes confused by homonyms, such as "their" and "there." You must also memorize verbal commands for even simple actions. Another pitfall is that some Canadians may have trouble making themselves understood. Seems that "oot and aboot" appear in type just as it sounds. Too bad, A?



Games | A royal ruckus

Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time (Ubisoft)

The Prince unleashes mayhem throughout the palace with the Dagger of Time, which can slow down, stop and reverse the action. He uses his gravity-defying acrobatic skills to battle demon hordes, protect the beautiful princess and confront the sorcerer. This adventure game is visually spectacular and tons of fun for all ages.



Web | Holiday how-to

Why suffer in ignorance when all you need is a little Web-site foresight to prep for the holidays? For carollers whose enthusiasm exceeds their memory, visit *www.christmas-carols.net*, a site with lyrics to 61 Christmas favourites. And do a little research before the New Year's bash at *www.all-about-hangovers.com*, where you can discover how best to avoid a bad hangover—or, failing that, how to recover from one.

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ROGERS



John Intini starts a sentence ... Conan O'Brien finishes it

Conan O'Brien has a degree in American history and literature from Harvard University, but ignore that. His true genius, buried somewhere in his six-foot, four-inch red-headed exterior, is of the comic variety. The former writer and supervising producer of *The Simpsons* has spent the last decade earning rave reviews as host of NBC's *Late Night*. And in February, the 40-year-old comedian will bring his self-deprecating wit to Toronto to tape four episodes of his talk show. Earlier this month, O'Brien finished *Maclean's* Researcher-Reporter **John Intini**'s sentences.

WHEN I GROW UP . . . I'll stop believing in Santa Claus and start believing in unicorns.

REDHEADS HAVE . . . red hair. Is that a trick question?

YOU DON'T ALWAYS HAVE TO BE THE BEST-LOOKING . . . to commit the perfect murder.

SADDAM HUSSEIN'S BEARD . . . is now selling on eBay. *Order now!*

THE COOLEST AMERICAN PRESIDENT OF ALL TIME WAS . . . Zachary Taylor. He died after eating cherries. I mean, how cool is that?

THE MOST IMPORTANT TRAIT I LOOK FOR IN A WOMAN IS . . . female genitalia.

IF I COULD CHOOSE A PRODUCT TO ENDORSE I'D PICK . . . Cher. The latest model is the best yet.

THE GREATEST ADVICE I'VE EVER RECEIVED FROM MY SHOW'S DRUMMER, MAX WEINBERG . . . umm, is hostile silence considered advice?

A WHITE MAN DANCING IS LIKE A . . . fish flying a biplane. They don't do it well, but it's always fun to watch.

ESSENTIAL CONAN O'BRIEN

1. Twice president of the Harvard humour magazine *Harvard Lampoon*.
2. Hired by Lorne Michaels to write *Saturday Night Live* skits in 1988.
3. Favourite *Simpsons* episode is *Marge vs. the Monorail*.

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CDs | Uneven notes

These days, classical artists seem compelled to seek out obscure works or contemporary music crossover opportunities. Blame or credit diva **Cecilia Bartoli** for this trend away from traditional works. Bartoli rocketed to stardom more than a decade ago by popularizing lesser-known, but deserving works of **Rossini**. Bartoli's latest, *The Salieri Album* (Decca), demonstrates two things: one, that **Antonio Salieri** had motive to poison, as legend has it, the musical titan **Mozart**, his Viennese court rival, and, two, that Bartoli has such a pure and technically superior voice that she's worth listening to no matter what she sings.







Two of Canada's top classical singers have also sought, in one case, the more obscure and, in the other, the more popular, in attempts to carve out a niche. Heldentenor **Ben Heppner**, who is bouncing back again after suffering a strained voice in Toronto last month—his second disastrous performance in less than two years—has received raves this season for his Tristan at the Metropolitan Opera. But his latest album features the forgettable songs of Italian composer **Paolo Tosti** (*Ideale. Songs of Paolo Tosti*, Deutsche Grammophon).

Superstar-in-the-making **Isabel Bayrakdarian**'s second album features less obscure music, but is still far afield from the repertoire she performs in opera houses and concert halls around the world. *Azulão* (CBC Records) is comprised of popular, sometimes heart-rending songs from Spain and arrangements from Latin America, opportunities for Bayrakdarian to showcase a range of emotions.

The astronomical costs of producing albums of grand opera with grand casts means we may never hear Heppner in a recording of *Tristan und Isolde* or Bayrakdarian in those lyric roles she is sure to claim for herself. Sadly, fans who wish to hear them in the comfort of their homes may be reduced to pleasant, but second-rate fare. MICHAEL BENEDICT

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BREGG/MACLEAN'S



PABLO PICASSO

Hooch | The Green Fairy

Packing a 70-per-cent-alcohol punch, absinthe can get you seriously wrecked. But this wrecking ball has artistic and literary heft. Among the legendary spirit's old time aficionados were **Edgar Degas, Vincent Van Gogh, Charles Baudelaire** and **Arthur Rimbaud. Oscar Wilde** once wrote that if you drank enough of the "Green Fairy," so-called because of its colour, "you see things that you want to see, wonderful, curious things." For **Ernest Hemingway**, "one cup of it took the place of . . . all the old evenings in cafés, of all chestnut trees that would be in bloom now in this month." But the fairy, like any alcoholic beverage, had its ogreish side. Van Gogh is thought to have cut off his earlobe during an absinthe binge. And in the early 1900s, the U.S. and many European countries banned the drink, citing an epidemic of "absinthism."

The spirit was never banned in wild and crazy Bohemia, now part of the Czech Republic, where one of its makers was Albin Hill. And now, thanks to the drink's aura of artsy decadence (it was traditionally thought to give both a creative and aphrodisiac lift), **Hill's Absinth** (Czechs drop the "e") is making a comeback.

That's where us wild and crazy Canucks come in. While absinthe is still banned in the U.S., it's never been illegal here, and for the past year Hill's has been blowing the heads off western Canadians (it recently hit liquor-store shelves in Ontario). Smuggling Hill's into the States has kept border officials busy—U.S. Customs names absinthe on its Web site list of prohibited items.

Legend has it that the mind destroying ingredient in absinthe is *Artemisia absinthum*, or wormwood, its main flavouring ingredient. Hill's Absinth has only a third of the wormwood found in the original spirit, so it wormwood is indeed the culprit, with Hill's you get a toned-down version of that particular kick. Perhaps that's why the bottle doesn't come with a warning about the possibility of cutting off one's earlobe.

Books | An adopted girl with sleuthing power

Steve Whan grew up loving the Hardy Boys. And while doing the paperwork to adopt his second Chinese daughter with wife Danielle Soulodre, the 45-year old North Vancouver Web site designer began thinking about a mystery book that would appeal to Samantha, now six, and Virginie, now four. So Whan began writing *Bullets on the Bund*, the tale of adopted Chinese girl Autumn Jade, 12, who sleuths with the help of visions of 1930s' Shanghai. He self published that book in 2001, and has since released *The Emperor's Pendant* (2002) and, recently, *Sing Song Girls* ($7.99 each, available at *http://www.autumnjade.com*). Filled with action and compelling details (*Sing Song Girls* features a horse ranch and, maybe, a unicorn), the books have proved popular with all kinds of kids, male and female.



BestSellers

Fiction

		POSITION LAST WEEK
1	**THE WAY THE CROW FLIES,** Ann Marie MacDonald (13)	1
2.	**VINYL CAFE DIARIES,** Stuart McLean (10)	10
3.	**THE DA VINCI CODE,** Dan Brown (30)	2
4.	**THE IN-BETWEEN WORLD OF VIKRAM LALL,** M.G. Vassanji (9)	3
5.	**THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME,** Mark Haddon (1)	
6.	**THE FIVE PEOPLE YOU MEET IN HEAVEN,** Mitch Albom (2)	5
7.	**DEAFENING,** Frances Itani (15)	7
8.	**THE ISLAND WALKERS,** John Bemrose (12)	4
9.	**RIVER OF THE BROKENHEARTED,** David Adams Richards (18)	6
10.	**THE ROTTWEILER,** Ruth Rendell (5)	8

Non-fiction

1.	**NEGEMONY OR SURVIVAL,** Noam Chomsky (4)	2
2.	**SHAKE HANDS WITH THE DEVIL,** Romeo Dallaire (9)	1
3.	**DUDE, WHERE'S MY COUNTRY?** Michael Moore (11)	3
4.	**A ROYAL DUTY,** Paul Burrell (1)	
5.	**A SHORT HISTORY OF NEARLY EVERYTHING,** Bill Bryson (1)	
6.	**CANADA: A PORTRAIT IN LETTERS,** Charlotte Gray (1)	
7	**THE MEANING OF EVERYTHING,** Simon Winchester (1)	
8.	**GOD'S SECRETARIES,** Adam Nicolson (1)	
9.	**LIVING TO TELL THE TALE,** Gabriel Garcia Márquez (2)	5
10.	**FRANKLIN DELANO ROOSEVELT** Conrad Black (4)	4

( ) Weeks on list
Compiled by Brian Bethune



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MY NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

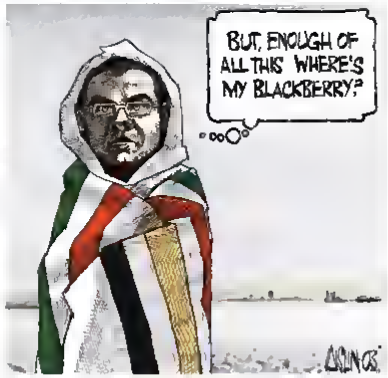
It's been a gift to be here—and I promise to keep trying to deserve it

YOU'LL BE HAPPY to know I found some art

I'd been filling this page for about five weeks when I wrote about my new home's bare walls. The walls demanded paintings. The walls were picky about what they would accept. I dedicated a whole column to my adventures shopping for art.

Then after eight months prowling the best galleries in Charlottetown, Winnipeg and Calgary, I found a painting at a gallery four blocks from my house. It's by a guy my age named Daniel Ross, and it shows a man standing in a snowy field, wrapped in a Hudson's Bay blanket. The walls love it.

The art column was a kind of experiment. But then this whole job is an experiment. That's the fun.



This page belonged to Allan Fotheringham for a quarter-century. Generations grew up reading him. I sure did. For a year after Dr. Foth left, the back page had no permanent resident. In May, when it became necessary to quit my old job in a huff, Tony Wilson-Smith offered to put me up.

It all happened rather suddenly. Perhaps the end of the year is a good time to pause, at last, and explain what I'm up to here.

There can be no finer precinct for an opinion writer to hang out his shingle than the back page of *Maclean's*. It offers complete freedom to pick my topic and my manner, a modest budget to get out of Ottawa and see the world, and—a sad rarity in today's news business—a proprietor who cannot be suspected of trying to make his journalists write what he likes to read.

Best of all, it offers a big audience of real Canadians. We are very good, here in Ottawa, at talking to ourselves. But whenever I catch myself worrying what some deputy minister thinks, an e-mail from Surrey, B.C., or Moncton, N.B., arrives to remind me of what matters.

Maclean's readers don't want me to get too comfortable here. George F. Will once wrote that a columnist should be gifted at changing the subject, my most offbeat columns have been the ones that drew the loudest and, for the most part, most enthusiastic response.

More readers responded to my October complaint about bad service in shops and restaurants than to anything I have ever written. Dozens thanked me for defending the rights of the ill-served. Others, dearly harried waiters, were mad as hell. Still others wrote variations on, "Dear Mister Fancy Columnist: Don't you have anything more important to write about?"

Actually, yes. But when I wrote about wars and budgets and elections and cabinet ministers, I never heard a word from these folks. I wanted to ask: don't *you* have anything more important to complain about?

But it was no surprise that columns about ordinary life would draw the most response. There is more to life than committees and bills. Every time I remember that, I hear from lots of happy readers.

A few earnest types did write to ask why I'd write about Cuban jazz musicians or my university experiments with cheese in the microwave oven. But way more readers wrote to discuss those pieces than responded to any of my attempts to peer into the mind of Paul Martin.

Maybe I should just stop writing about politics? Sorry, I can't. Especially because some of the columns that drew the heartiest response were the ones that dove right into complicated public-policy debates. In the spring I contrasted France's failed attempts to modernize its public pensions with Canada's much happier experience. Now, it's really, really hard to be funny about pension reform. I wrote the column anyway. Months later, people still mention that column more often than a lot of lighter pieces.

A detailed discussion of Mayor Glen Murray's "New Deal" for Winnipeg led to two weeks of thoughtful debate on my Weblog, *www.macleans.ca/paulwells*. (These days most of my writing goes straight to the Web site, go check it out if you haven't yet.) Too much journalism these days is about who's popular or who's in trouble. Readers are grateful for any attempt to explain how we're governed.

Time for New Year's resolutions. First, no more columns about my column. This will be my last attempt to explain what's going on here. The column has to speak for itself.

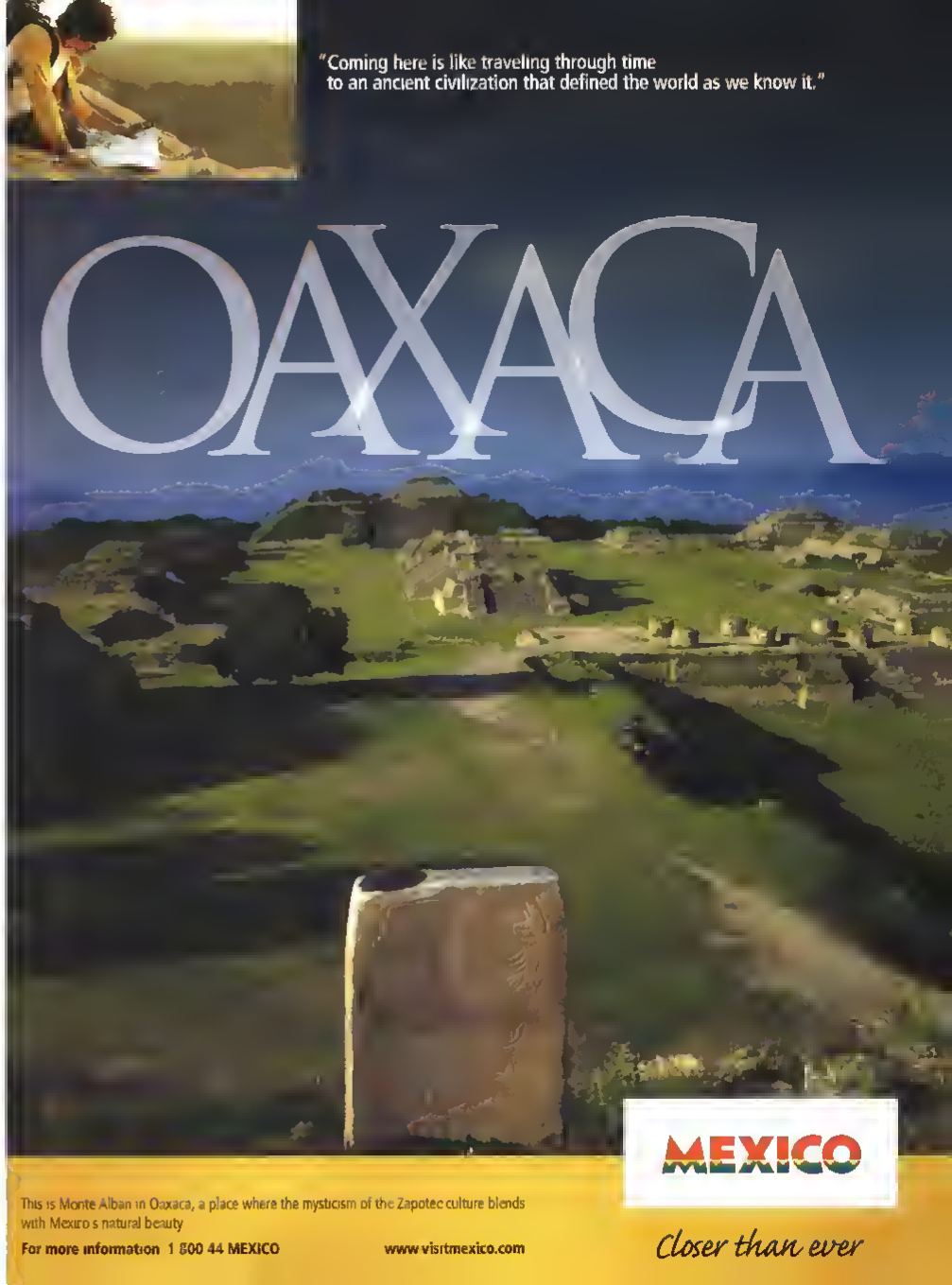
Second—well, normally I'd promise to diversify the portfolio, to write less about politics and more about everything else. But 2004 will be the wrong year for that. With general elections in Canada and the United States, I'll be stuck on the campaign trail for much of the year. It'll be a blast, actually.

I ran into Allan Fotheringham the other day. He still has that glint in his eye. It has been an amazing gift to move into a great magazine that has featured, at various points in its history, Dr. Foth and Peter C. Newman and Blair Fraser. I promise to keep trying to deserve it. Happy holidays. M

To comment: backpage@macleans.ca
Read Paul Wells's Weblog, "Inkless Wells," at *www.macleans.ca/paulwells*

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